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March-April 2014

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Nick Lowles

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European Elections

Much of this edition of HOPE not hate is dedicated to May's European Elections. While the elections themselves mean little to a lot of people, its outcome will have significant consequences for domestic politics. A victory for UKIP will have a big impact on the debate about immigration and migration ahead of the 2015 General Election and could see - if uncontested - the main political parties adopt more draconian policies as a consequence.

As this issue clearly illustrates, HOPE not hate is taking on UKIP in these elections. We have consulted our supporters over the past year and while we initially decided simply to oppose UKIP's use of racism we have since reviewed this and decided we needed to take a more robust position. This is partly the consequence of UKIP adopting even more hardline anti-migrant rhetoric over the past year, coupled with their abject failure to adequately deal with racists within their own organisation. But it is also a realisation that there is a bigger cultural battle going on for the type of Britain we want to live in. The type of society most UKIP supporters want is not one shared by most HOPE not hate supporters, and in the absence of the main political parties taking on UKIP - culturally and politically - we believe that we have to take a stand.

The European elections will also graphically show the growing disconnect between mainstream political parties and people. In some countries populist revolt will benefit the right, in others the left. And while Cas Mudde is correct to highlight that the fortunes of far right/right wing populist parties will be mixed, any election where racist or Islamophobic parties can top national elections - as is possible in France - should be of major concern.

While our main focus will be on UKIP, let us not also forget that the elections

give us the chance to boot Nick Griffin out of the European Parliament and push the BNP down to just one elected councillor. This is quite a turnaround from four years ago when the BNP secured 6.4% of the national vote, had two MEPs and had 67 local councillors. Much of their subsequent collapse was the result of incessant campaigning and exposures by HOPE not hate and anti-fascists around the country, particularly the party's heavy 2010 defeat in Barking and Dagenham. This in turn led to bitter infighting and UKIP taking their support.

As we prepare for our new battle against UKIP, the defeat and decline of the BNP shows that HOPE can defeat hate.

NEVER AGAIN?

April marks the 20th anniversary of the Rwandan massacre, when 800,000 people were butchered to death in just 10 weeks in the small east African country. One in 10 of the population was killed, including 70% of all Tutsi living in the country at the time.

As has become common after such genocides, world leaders wring their hands and say "never again" - conveniently forgetting their own shameful role in allowing it to happen.

But, sadly, it is happening again. Whether it is in the Central African Republic or the systematic murder of Muslims in Burma, genocide continues to haunt us. And even in Rwanda, the killings continue, though now by proxy in the refugee camps in the Congo and through co-ordinated assassination programme against critics and opponents orchestrated by the Kagame government.

So as Western governments comment on the genocide, as they will, let us not forget that in the days of modern communications, the internet and citizen journalism, genocides can only happen if others turn a blind eye.

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GROUP IN FOCUS COMBAT 18 AND THE C18 INTERNATIONAL

HOPE not hate challenges the politics of hate and organised intolerance within society.

Initially established to counter the electoral rise of the BNP, HOPE not hate mobilises communities by providing a positive alternative to the politics of hate. Since it was founded in 2004, HOPE not hate has over 165,000 online supporters and over 60,000 followers on Facebook.

We are not aligned to any political party and will work with everyone wherever possible.

HOPE not hate comprises HOPE not hate Ltd and our charitable wing, HOPE not hate Educational Ltd.

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CAS MUDDÉ

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COLLEEN MOLLOY

City of Sanctuary
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Extremist handed five-year Asbo

AN ISLAMIC extremist has been handed a five year Anti Social Behavioural Order, according to The Metropolitan Police.

Jordan Horner (pictured right), from Walthamstow, is a known follower of Anjem Choudary and regularly takes part in activities organised by the Muslim extremist leader.

The ASBO was enforced after Horner took part in vigilante patrols and street protests promoting extreme versions of Islam.

The ASBO forbids Horner being in public with four named men for any purpose other than peaceful worship. The four named are Royal Barnes, Ricardo McFarlane, Dean Le Page and Anjem Choudary.

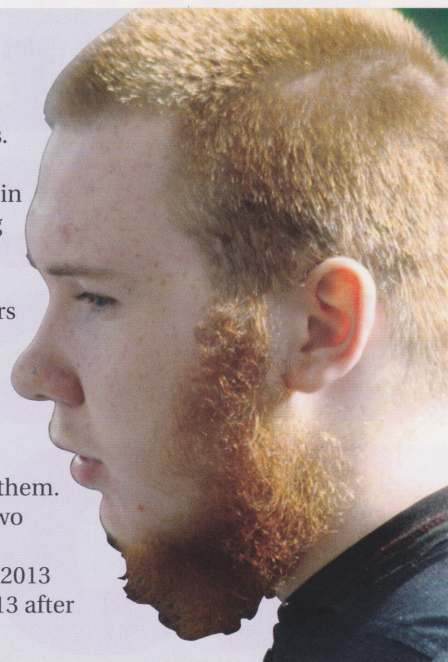
He has also been banned from using a loudhailer in a public place, banned from entering any educational establishments and has been forbidden from promoting

Sharia law, distributing unsolicited material and damaging public adverts.

Horner, who also uses the name Jamaal Uddin, was jailed for 68 weeks in 2013 for assault and using threatening words and behaviour following his involvement in an Islamic vigilante patrol that threatened to stab members of the public and "kill non-believers" on the streets of East London.

The patrol confiscated alcohol and lectured non-Muslims for their anti-Islamic behaviour, with Horner assaulting two men after confronting them.

He also threatened two doctors in two separate incidents which took place between December 2012 and January 2013 and was also jailed for six weeks in 2013 after attacking a photographer.



BNP lose court battle

THE BNP appears to be in financial straits after it lost its High Court battle to hang onto £389,000 left to the party in the will of an elderly ex-pat member.

Joseph Robson, 81, who died in Spain in 2010, left his entire estate to the BNP, leaving just £135 to one of his two sons.

Judge Richard Sheldon ruled that Mr Robson's bequest fell foul of a ban on foreign donations to political parties, saying the BNP broke the law by 'receiving' and 'accepting' the gift. Robson left the UK in 1992 and was unlikely to be on any electoral roll.

Before the hearing, the BNP had attempted to divert the funds to a charitable trust set up by three senior BNP members and one non-member, Nick Griffin, his daughter Jennfier Matthys, party treasurer Clive Jefferson and Patrick Harrington, who executed a deed of variation to the will so the money could be paid into the specially-created trust.

The court ruling effectively tore up Robson's will and awarded his entire fortune to his sons.

Far right christian patrols in east London

THE FAR RIGHT Britain First has attempted to stir up hatred in East London by holding what they called 'Christian Patrols'.

Led by former BNP councillor Paul Golding, Britain First filmed themselves confronting Muslims in and around the Whitechapel area.

Around 15 Britain First activists drove into the area in two armoured Gulf War Land Rovers and distributed leaflets in

response to the Muslim Patrol group that operated in the Tower Hamlets area, a number of whom were recently jailed.

Members of the far right group confronted people in the area telling them: "If you want to live here, you abide by our rules." The group also set out to antagonise local Muslims by drinking beer and smoking cigarettes outside an east London mosque.

The group held up a banner which read "We are the British resistance." On the banner was a picture of murdered soldier Lee Rigby with the caption: "The day Lee Rigby was murdered, thousands of patriots were born ... the fight back has begun."

Golding is currently on bail for harassing Islamic extremist leader Anjem Choudary and part of his bail conditions state he must not take part in any political activities.



Neo Nazi jailed for attacks on women and girls

A SCOTTISH neo Nazi has been jailed for four-and-a-half years following a 10-year campaign of violence against women, including two who were heavily pregnant at the time.

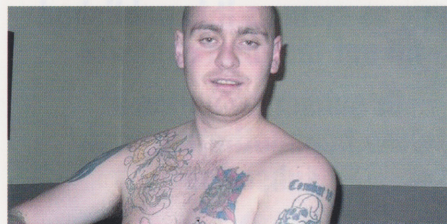
James Boyd (pictured), from Whitburn, West Lothian told one of his victims she didn't deserve a child as he viciously kicked her in the stomach.

Boyd also attacked a 14-year-old girl, stamping on her private parts, attempting to leave her unable to have children.

He attempted to strangle girlfriend Leigh Cameron while pregnant with their child and threw her down a flight of stairs.

BNP and NF activist Boyd was obsessed with Hitler, has a Combat 18 tattoo on his arm, a string of convictions for racist attacks, and has been described by police as "a predatory, callous and unremorseful individual".

BNP Scottish regional organiser Kenny McDonald tried to claim Boyd wasn't involved with the party despite there being



pictures of the racist thug on its website.

Boyd was arrested after the mother of one of his victims, a 13-year-old girl, reported him to police. The girl had been kept as a hostage and was beaten by Boyd for three days.

Bob Crow a giant in the fight for equality and human dignity



JUST AS this issue of the magazine was going to press we learned the awful news that RMT leader Bob Crow has passed away.

Bob, who was 52, was a dedicated anti-racist and anti-fascist. He led the way in tirelessly confronting injustice both in the workplace and in wider society.

He was an absolute giant in the fight for equality and human dignity.

He actively campaigned for an educated and organised working class his entire life. The strength of the RMT union is testament to that commitment. His passion for his work and his members is an enormous loss to the Trade Union and anti-fascist movement.

To his family, friends and Comrades, we send our most sincere condolences.

Nazi jailed for KKK video



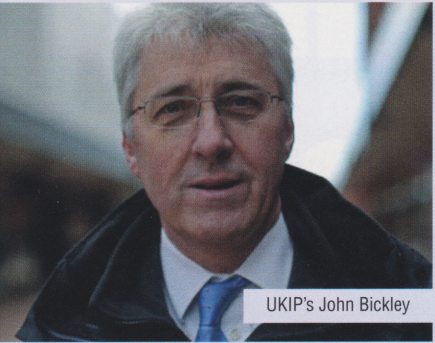
CHRISTOPHER PHILIPS, aka Darren Clift, a West Midlands Neo Nazi who admitted posting a video online showing someone dressed in a Ku Klux Klan costume hanging a life sized golliwog has received a one year jail sentence.

Christopher Philips, also known as Darren Clift, from Wolverhampton pleaded guilty to posting three videos online, which were filmed at a far right music concert.

BNP Wilt In Wythenshawe By-Election



BNP's Eddy O'Sullivan



UKIP's John Bickley

A PARLIAMENTARY by-election was called in February for the Wythenshawe and Sale East constituency following the sad death of the popular Labour MP Paul Goggins.

Both the BNP and UKIP quickly announced their candidates and from the start ran very different campaigns.

UKIP announced their candidate as local businessman John Bickley who immediately caused a stir when it was revealed that he took nearly £100,000 of EU cash to prop up his failing computer business from a Brussels fund. It seems his relationship with the European Union soured after his company went bust in 2009 owing more than £450,000 in debts.

The BNP chose Salford driving instructor Eddy O'Sullivan as their candidate.

O'Sullivan, the Manchester BNP organiser, also has a colourful past. In 2009, standing as a European candidate it was revealed by a national newspaper that he had posted a number of racist comments on his Facebook page and was briefly suspended from the BNP.

In 2012 O'Sullivan spoke at a BNP meeting in Tameside where he claimed the 9/11 terror attack in New York in 2001 was a Zionist conspiracy.

UKIP opened an office in a disused shop in Wythenshawe town centre and imported large numbers of party activists from around the UK including well known faces such as Neil and Christine Hamilton and party leader Nigel Farage.

Intimidation

The BNP have few activists these days and even less money so it was impossible for them to mirror UKIP's

election machine. It was left to the usual handful of Griffin sycophants to attempt anything that resembled a decent campaign.

With UKIP focussing their attention on their pet subjects of the EU and immigration, the BNP had to find a new angle to attempt to win over the voters, and decided on trying to intimidate rival campaigners in the UKIP camp.

When Farage arrived in Wythenshawe to lend a hand, locals witnessed bizarre scenes where the small contingent of BNP activists, led by party treasurer Clive Jefferson, chased Farage and his entourage into a local coffee shop, forcing the UKIP leader to make a hasty exit down a fire escape at the rear of the building.

An angry exchange took place outside the coffee shop between Jefferson and UKIP MEP Stuart Agnew, with Agnew attempting to snatch Jefferson's loud hailer.

Eventually moved on, Jefferson and his BNP team parked themselves outside the UKIP HQ and continued to abuse anyone within earshot.

Speaking to the BBC, O'Sullivan declared it the best BNP campaign they had ever fought.

But on the day of the election count it was clear Labour had won this safe seat, with their candidate Mike Kane receiving more than 55% of the vote.

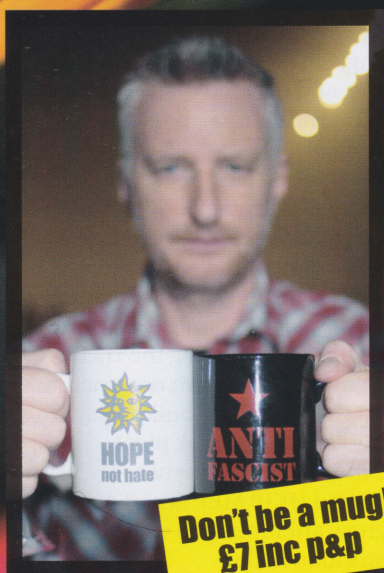
The battle was for second place between UKIP and The Conservative Party, with Bickley finishing in runner-up spot with 18%, up 14.5% from their General Election result in 2010.

The days of decent results for the BNP are long gone, and this time it slipped to sixth place with just 3% of the vote, only beating The Monster Raving Loony Party.

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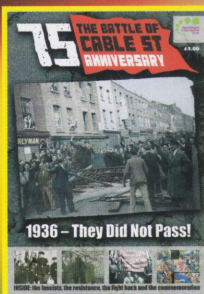
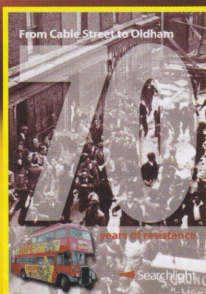
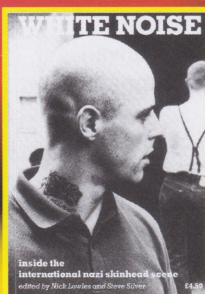
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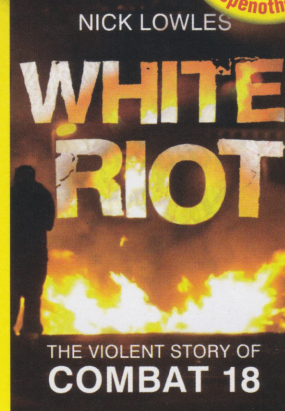
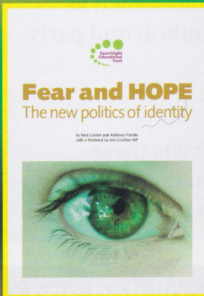
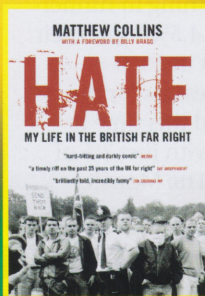
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Guest column...

Ukip's rise threatens the left as well as the right

Nick Cohen on how progressive society needs to take on UKIP

THE BRITISH CENTRE-LEFT has been tempted to ignore UKIP – the most powerful movement of organised stupidity in recent British history – even to welcome it in a quiet way. Conventional wisdom holds that Labour's hopes of winning the next election depend on the right-wing vote splitting. UKIP are the splitters, who will let the left come through the middle in marginal seats.

A look at January 2014 shows that you have to forgive and forget a great deal before you can treat UKIP with anything other than hostility. Farage disowned the entire 2010 UKIP manifesto – and not in the open manner of an honest politician admitting to past mistakes. Instead, he pretended he knew nothing of his party's promises for a dress code for taxi drivers and a state-enforced repainting of the nation's trains in traditional colours. Imagine if anyone else in public life said that a document they had put their name to was “drivel” and tried to avoid awkward questions by pretending they had never read it. At a minimum, they would be greeted with guffaws of incredulous laughter.

Beyond the Farage farragos, one Demetri Marchessini, a UKIP donor, paid for an advert in the *Telegraph* to announce his abhorrence of homosexuality. He praised the opportunist homophobia of the Putin regime.

UKIP's obsession with what gay men do with their bodies was manifest in the remark of an Oxfordshire councillor that the floods were God's punishment for allowing homosexuality. Meanwhile Arthur Misty

Thackeray, UKIP's Scottish leader, claimed Glasgow council was run by a hitherto unknown conspiracy of “gays, Catholics, and communists”.

For all that, UKIP still attracts 17% of the vote. It is not only a large political force in its own right but has large effects on all around it. How many of the 90 or so Tories tearing their party apart are de facto UKIP supporters is unknowable. A few hate David Cameron so much they form a Farageist fifth column. Most, however, are frightened. If they don't rebel on Europe, immigration and human rights, they know that UKIP may deprive them of their seats by using their failure against them..

And Cameron is capitulating too. He is frightened of taking on his own backbenchers, who are frightened of taking on Farage, because he does not want the public to see what he is: the John Major of the 2010s. You could argue the capitulation extends to the centre-left, which is relearning the old lesson that in hard times people look to themselves and their families rather than wider notions of the common good.

In other words, Ukip's success as fearmongers has sent a flood of fear cascading down the political system.

For 100 years, the most reassuring feature of British society was that it did not vote for extremist parties. Far left and far right have pushed their conspiracy theories and shouted their slogans until they were hoarse: all in vain. But UKIP is breaking with the past. HOPE not hate, which had campaigned with great success



Photo: Jennifer Jane Mills

against the BNP, discussed last year whether it should fight UKIP too. On one hand, it reasoned, UKIP is not a neo-fascist party with origins in European totalitarianism. On the other, well, just look at the bigoted rabble. HOPE not hate decided to go for them because it understood that UKIP has made extreme hatreds respectable.

Xenophobic voters who wouldn't have supported tattooed men with beer bellies hanging over their belts will vote for Farage. As local, European and parliamentary election results make clear, many of them once voted Labour. That Farage, a City man, who offers nothing that might improve their living conditions or job security, can speak to them ought to be a matter of shame to the British left. On some issues, there can be no compromise: racism and other phobias.

But a toning down of political correctness would be most welcome, as would an abandonment of the jargon-filled

language of the intellectual left, which ordinary people cannot understand. A robust campaign to tell UKIP supporters and business leaders who foolishly ally with the Tories, that Britain cannot afford to leave the EU would also be in order. So would an attempt to build a populist social democracy, which Ed Miliband and his supporters are trying to do.

In their forthcoming *Revolt on the Right*, academics Robert Ford and Matthew Goodwin will present convincing evidence that in the long run UKIP will hit the left harder than the Conservatives.

Even if they are wrong, and even if Farage sends Miliband to Downing Street, it is not good enough to stand by while chancers sell millions of our fellow citizens every prejudice known to man. Left and right are not divided by some Berlin Wall. The one affects the other. A successful far right will poison the whole of politics. The best course is to hit early and hit it hard.

■ This article first appeared in *The Observer* on 2 February and has been reproduced with the permission of both the author and newspaper

The Le Pen-Wilders alliance

Plus ça change, plus



and the European Parliament c'est la même chose



The European elections are less than 100 days away and the media is slowly but steadily moving from the topic of a far right victory in the elections – which has now become an established ‘fact’ – to that of a far right party group after the elections, which seems a certainty if one is to believe the international media. By Cas Mudde

It has recently been argued that a new ‘Le Pen-Wilders’ alliance will change European politics. But who is in and who is out of this ‘alliance’? And how will this ‘brown international’, as anti-fascists love referring to it, function within the new European Parliament (EP)?

To address the last question first, probably not very well. The far right has a long and mostly unsuccessful history of collaboration in the EP. The first official far right group was the ‘Group of the European Right’ in the 1984-89 parliament, which included members of the FN, the Italian Social Movement (MSI), the tiny Greek EPEN, and the Northern Irish Ulster Unionist Party.

In the next EP (1989-94), the FN had replaced the MSI with the Belgian Flemish Bloc (VB) and the German Republicans (REP). This ‘Technical Faction of the European Right’ agreed only on a minimum program, being internally divided between ethnic and state nationalist parties, and ended de facto in 1991, after the six-member REP faction imploded.

Between 1994 and 1999, the far right was without an official group and in the 1999-2004 period there was a short-lived Technical Group for Non-Attached Members – Mixed Group (TDI), which included both the usual suspects (e.g. FN, VB, and the MSI-split Tricolor Flame, MS-FT) and some non-far right MEPS (including Basque separatists and Italian radicals).

The last official party group was called ‘Identity, Tradition, Sovereignty’ (ITS),

which only became mathematically possible because of the joining of the EU of Bulgaria and Romania in January 2007. ITS included the new European axis of the FN and Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ), the always present VB (which had re-established itself as Flemish Interest/Vlaams Belang), two MSI-splits, the Bulgarian Ataka party and the Greater Romania Party (PRM).

Xenophobic

It faltered after ITS member Alessandra Mussolini (the granddaughter of the Italian Fascist leader Benito Mussolini) made xenophobic remarks about Romanian immigrants in Italy, and the PRM left the ITS.

That was November 2007. And although far right parties did well in the 2009 elections, they were unable to form an official party group in the current EP. There were many attempts to come together, but personal and political considerations prevented the FN-FPÖ-Northern League (LN)-VB axis from finding new suitors.

Now it looks like the succession of Jean-Marie Le Pen by daughter Marine Le Pen has not only led to a new élan for the far right in France, but also in Europe. To the surprise of many, Geert Wilders, party leader and only member of the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV), recently reversed his position of never co-operating with the “extreme right” and “antisemitic” FN.

In a much-covered press conference with Marine Le Pen in The Hague, he announced that the FN and PVV will

(left to right) Béla Kovács – Jobbik, Nick Griffin – British National Party, Valerio Cignetti – Fiamma Tricolore, Bruno Gollnisch – Front National



campaign jointly for the 2014 European elections and will collaborate in the European Alliance for Freedom (EAF) that will “wreck” the European Union from within the EP.

To constitute an official party group in the next EP, the rules state the following: “25 members are needed to form a political group, and at least one-quarter of the member states must be represented within the group. Members may not belong to more than one political group.”

According to my predictions eleven far right parties will (re-)gain entry into the next EP: the Austrian FPÖ, the Belgian VB, the Bulgarian Ataka, the Danish People's Party (DF), the Dutch PVV, the French FN, Greek Golden Dawn (CA), if it stands, the Hungarian Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik), the Italian Northern League (LN), the Latvian National Alliance (NA), and the Sweden Democrats (SD) – perhaps the relatively new Slovak People's Party-New Slovakia (LSNS) will also make it. Together they will get between 40 and 50 seats. Seems a pretty straightforward issue then... but is it?

The alliance between the FN and PVV might already guarantee the 25 seats, but only includes two of the required seven member states. At the initial ‘secret meeting’ in Vienna, in November 2013, three more parties were present: the FPÖ, LN and VB. With the exception of the PVV, these four have constituted the core of the European radical right alliance for the past decades.

Collaboration

The most likely candidates to complete the group of seven would seem to be the DF and SD, which would keep the party group relatively homogeneous: all populist radical right parties in relatively affluent West European countries and regions. This notwithstanding, so far the Scandinavians have been hesitant to join, for all the familiar reasons.

The DF has a long history of snubbing the FN- FPÖ-VB alliance for the mixed mainstream and far right party groups, the Union of Europe of the Nations (UEN) and Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD). In surprisingly harsh terms, foreign affairs spokesperson, Søren Espersen, not only rejected the invitation to join the EAF, he also said that the DF would cut ties with the SD if that party would join. Both Le Pen and Wilders have been visiting Sweden to gain the SD's support.

Despite decades of low-key collaboration between FN and SD, often at the explicit request of the Swedes, party leader Jimmie Åkesson is responding cautiously now. Being more concerned with national than European elections, Åkesson has said that the SD will only consider joining after the Swedish parliamentary elections, to be held on 14 September 2014.

This leaves Le Pen and Wilders with two choices: the extreme right or other Eurosceptic populists, who are not far right. Ataka, Jobbik and Golden Dawn are all considered beyond the pale for

most EAF members – the same applies to LSNS. All these parties are deeply antisemitic and have been linked to significant political violence.

That said, there have been connections, most notably through the Alliance of European National Movements (AENM), which includes MEPs from, among others, Ataka, the British National Party (BNP), Jobbik and VB. Its president used to be Bruno Gollnisch, an old FN stalwart in the EP, and close to Jean-Marie Le Pen. However, when Marine Le Pen took over, she changed AENM for EAF, and told her father and Gollnisch to sever ties to their old brethren.

For the radical right EAF parties collaboration with the extreme right AENM parties could mean national suicide. It would make them vulnerable to guilt-by-association charges of antisemitism and extremism, which could cost them support from national voters and further diminish their chances at national collaboration with non-radical right parties.

UKIP snub

The only possible exception in Eastern Europe is the NA, a little known merger of an extreme right and a national conservative party, which is currently a junior coalition partner in the Latvian government. However, for that party an alliance with the marginalized EAF parties could be national suicide, so there is little chance they would be interested.

This leaves parties that are considered far right by some scholars and many media, most notably the Finns Party (PS) and the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), but that are, and consider themselves, much less radical than Le Pen and Wilders.

Despite sustained courting and flattering by both Le Pen and Wilders, Nigel Farage has made it absolutely clear that UKIP will not "get into bed" with Le Pen. Given that the Finns Party is close to the DF and UKIP, with which they are in the EFD group, there is little chance that they will join the EAF.

So, where does this leave the as yet unnamed Le Pen-Wilders alliance? It is pretty certain that there will be no official far right party group in the new EP, at least for the first couple of months. After the Swedish election the SD might join the alliance, but that would still leave them one country short.

While they could pick up a rogue MEP, this would leave the group vulnerable to dissent and defections, as they always have been in the past. The situation could change after the next British parliamentary elections, scheduled for May 7, 2015, depending on the electoral and political outcome of UKIP. If UKIP fares very poorly, or is politically marginalised by the other

parties, it could join the EAF group. This would put the party in good company, as the FPÖ and PVV also only ended their self-isolation from the FN after being marginalized in the national political arena.

And even then, will the EAF have to deal with the same demons as its predecessors? First, there are the personal tensions between and within the different parties. History teaches us that far right party factions in the EP are fragile and they split easy.

On top of that, the FN dominance of the EAF creates additional tensions within and between the parties. It is not the more pragmatic leaders like Wilders and Le Pen who are running the show in the EP, but hardliners like Bruno Gollnisch and Andreas Mölzer (FPÖ).

Second, there are the political tensions. Previous party groupings have faltered over nationalist arguments over border disputes and national minorities. As long as the EAF only have West European members, that risk is fairly limited. However, while all parties

are Eurosceptic and anti-immigrant, they do not necessarily see eye to eye on all issues.

Most importantly, while some parties want their country to leave the EU (eg FN, PVV, UKIP), others want to reform the EU into a more intergovernmental organization (e.g. FPÖ, VB). Similarly, some parties want closer transatlantic ties with the US (eg PVV and UKIP), while others want a European front against US dominance (eg FN and LN). Even socio-economically these parties will disagree, but all will put their own national interest above European solidarity.

In short, while the far right will undoubtedly have enough parties and seats to form an official party group, history teaches us that the chances that this group will be an important political actor in the next EP are slim to none. Rather than changing Europe, the Le Pen-Wilders alliance will probably continue the tradition of "conflicted politicians" with much bark and little bite.

■ **Cas Mudde** is an assistant professor in the School for Public and International Policy at the University of Georgia. He is the author of *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. With full acknowledgement to the *Washington Post* where the article originally appeared.

Gateway to Terror

Anjem Choudary and the al-Muhajiroun network



HOPE not hate
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New from
HOPE not hate

The terror connection



GATEWAY TO TERROR is a new report by HOPE not hate into Anjem Choudary and the al-Muhajiroun network. It is the most detailed investigation into this Islamist extremist organisation, its structures and its terrorist connections.

The 60-page publication lists those convicted of terrorism or terror-related offences, or who have

actually participated in suicide attacks, who have been linked to the group. It names the man who narrated a recent al-Shabaab video and his links to the group. It charts the growing connections between Choudary and the northern Iraqi Ansar al-Islam and discloses that between 200-300 supporters from Choudary's network have gone to fight in Syria.

Gateway to Terror can be purchased for £5 (plus £2 p&p) from
www.hopenothate.org.uk/al-muhajiroun/

The 2014 European election: an overview

As 28 countries go to the polls in May, HOPE not hate looks at the far right and right wing populist groups who hope to make an impact.

UNITED KINGDOM

Party: BNP/UKIP
Current MEPs: 1/9
Vote in 2009 elections: 6.4%/16.6%
Current support*: 1%/19%



NETHERLANDS

Party: Freedom Party
Current MEPs: 4
Vote in 2009 elections: 11.4%
Current support*: 27%



BELGIUM

Party: Vlaams Belang
Current MEPs: 2
Vote in 2009 elections: 10.2%
Current support*: 7.6%



FRANCE

Party: Front National
Current MEPs: 3
Vote in 2009 elections: 6.3%
Current support*: 24%



SPAIN

Party: Republican Social Movement
Current MEPs: None
Vote in 2009 elections: 0.6%
Current support*: Below 1%



GERMANY

Party: National Democratic Party
Current MEPs: None
Vote in 2009 elections: Did not stand
Current support*: Unknown



AUSTRIA

Party: Freedom Party
Current MEPs: 2
Vote in 2009 elections: 13.1%
Current support*: 23%



GERMANY

Party: Alliance for Germany
Current MEPs: None
Vote in 2009 elections: Did not stand
Current support*: 5%



SLOVENIA

Party: None standing
Current MEPs: None
Vote in 2009 elections: 2.8 (Slovenian National Party)



SWEDEN

Party: Sweden Democrats
Current MEPs: 0
Vote in 2009 elections: 3.3%
Current support*: 9.5%


FINLAND

Party: Finns Party
Current MEPs: 1
Vote in 2009 elections: 9.8%
Current support*: 16%


DENMARK

Party: Danish People's Party
Current MEPs: 1
Vote in 2009 elections: 15.3%
Current support*: 17.4%


LITHUANIA

Party: Lithuanian National Union
Current MEPs: None
Vote in 2009 elections: Did not stand
Current support*: Below 1%


POLAND

Party: National Movement
Current MEPs: None
Vote in 2009 elections: Did not stand
Current support*: 1.5%


LATVIA

Party: National Alliance
Current MEPs: 1
Vote in 2009 elections: DNS
Current support*: 7%


SLOVAKIA

Party: Slovak National Party
Current MEPs: 1
Vote in 2009 elections: 5.3%
Current support*: 5.3%


CZECH REPUBLIC

Party: Úsvit (The Dawn)
Current MEPs: None
Vote in 2009 elections: Did not stand
Current support*: 6%


HUNGARY

Party: Jobbik
Current MEPs: 3
Vote in 2009 elections: 14.8%
Current support*: 14%


ROMANIA

Party: Greater Romania Party
Current MEPs: 2
Vote in 2009 elections: 8.7%
Current support*: 3%


BULGARIA

Party: ATAKA
Current MEPs: 2
Vote in 2009 elections: 12%
Current support*: 2.5%


ITALY

Party: Lega Nord
Current MEPs: 7
Vote in 2009 elections: 10.2%
Current support*: 3.4-5.2%


GREECE

Party: Golden Dawn/National Dawn
Current MEPs: 0
Vote in 2009 elections: 0.5%
Current support*: 9.6%


CYPRUS

Party: European Party (EVROKO)/
National Popular Front (ELAM)
Current MEPs: None
Vote in 2009 elections: Did not stand
Current support*: Both below 1%



UKIP in our sights

As UKIP establishes itself as a major political force, Nick Lowles argues it is time to take them on politically, culturally and economically.

When Nigel Farage took to the stage at his party's spring conference, he had two options. Buoyed up by strong opinion polls and a firm and loyal following, he could have used the occasion to present a softer, more moderate image to head off his detractors. He chose not to. Instead, he faced his audience and delivered one of his strongest speeches on immigration to date.

While insisting that he was "not anti-immigration", Farage nevertheless said parts of Britain were becoming a "foreign land". He attacked the main political parties for allowing "open door immigration" and said this was not the legacy he wanted to leave to "our children and grandchildren", and boasted that he was leading a "patriotic fightback" against the EU.

No one listening to his speech was left in any doubt that immigration was going to be at the forefront of UKIP's European election campaign.

Speaking to journalists after, he went further: "I got the train the other night, it was rush hour, from Charing Cross. It was a stopper going out and we stopped at London Bridge, New Cross, Hither Green. It was not until we got past Grove Park that I could hear English being audibly spoken in the carriage. Does that make me feel slightly awkward? Yes it does."

His imagery, use of evocative language and – factual dishonesty – was straight out of Enoch Powell's playbook.

Overtly racist

Farage's conference speech was widely viewed as further evidence by many political commentators that the party was moving to the right. This view was probably reinforced by the adoption of the slogan 'Love Britain, Vote UKIP', which appears to be a direct rip-off from the 'Love Britain, Vote BNP' slogan the BNP used in 2010.

Dan Hodges, who blogs for the *Telegraph*, and who a year ago was vehemently opposed to HOPE not hate opposing UKIP, wrote: "There is no longer any point in attempting to deconstruct Ukip in a vain effort to legitimise them. The laughter at Paul Eastwood's jokes was genuine. Its slogan "Love Britain, Vote Ukip" was not appropriated from the BNP by accident. Nigel Farage's ludicrous tale about the silence of the English north of Grove Park was deployed for a purpose.

"Ukip is now an overtly racist and extremist party."

James Kirkup, the *Telegraph's* political editor, wrote that Farage's "damnation of Britain as a foreign land will do him no favours".

Perhaps the most damning indictment of Farage's strategy was given by the *Sun's* political editor, Tom Newton Dunn, who tweeted: "He's purposely pushed the boat out on foreigner hatred to try to pull in more Labour blue collar, but it sounds ugly. Too BNP".

Newton-Dunn was referring to a growing wealth of research which suggests that UKIP is a far more working class party than is usually considered.

This is the central point in *Revolt on the Right*, a new book on UKIP's support by Rob Ford and Matthew Goodwin.

"To truly understand UKIP's appeal you need to go much deeper," the authors say. "The roots of this revolt can be traced back over decades. Divides in the social and economic experiences of voters have appeared, their values and priorities have been widening, and a new electorate of "left behind" voters has grown up. These voters are on the wrong side of social change, are struggling on stagnant incomes, feel threatened by the way their communities and country are changing, and are furious at an established politics that appears not to understand or even care about their concerns. And it is these left-behind voters who have finally found a voice in Farage's revolt.

"Make no mistake, this is a revolt dominated by white faces, blue collars and grey hair: angry, old, white working-class men who left school at the earliest opportunity and lack the





qualifications to get ahead in 21st-century Britain. That UKIP's core voters are middle-class Tories animated by the single-issue of Europe is the biggest myth in Westminster. In fact, UKIP is the most working-class-dominated party since Michael Foot's Labour in 1983. They struggle financially, worry about the future, and loathe the political class."

UKIP rhetoric

To Newton-Dunn, Farage's increasingly hostile tone on immigration is a political ploy to appeal directly to these disgruntled and detached white working class men.

HOPE not hate has also seen this hardening anti-immigrant tone over the past year. We saw it in the way in which UKIP deliberately sought to spread fear of Bulgarian and Romanian immigration in the second half of last year and when the predicted flood of migrants did not occur, rather than apologising or reassessing their strategy, the party merely refocused their anti-immigrant anger on Italians,

Greeks and Spaniards.

It is because of this hardening of their anti-immigrant rhetoric that HOPE not hate has been forced to reassess our own position towards UKIP.

Last spring, as it was becoming clear that UKIP was emerging as a serious political force, we asked our supporters how we should respond. Over 3,500 people answered an online survey and another 1,000 people attended dozens of meetings we held around the country.

While there was a general unease about UKIP's rhetoric, there was also an acceptance that they were not a fascist party and Nigel Farage was certainly not Nick Griffin. The consensus was that we should expose any racist and anti-immigrant campaigns run by UKIP, and the racist individuals within the party, but not simply campaign against the party itself. Our supporters also understood that UKIP tapped into a cultural unease about immigration and that it was important for us to challenge this by debunking myths

Nigel Farage's anti-immigrant speech at conference has ensured that UKIP is now firmly in HOPE not hate's sights
Photo: Jennifer Jane Mills

and offering a more positive vision of society.

We agreed, however, to review this decision after six months, which we have now done, and we believe we have no choice but to take UKIP on more directly.

Lack of action

In addition to UKIP's shift to the right, we have become increasingly concerned with the party's failure to deal with leading members and officials who say extremist or inappropriate statements.

There was Alex Woods, the UKIP candidate from Somerset who was pictured giving a nazi salute, and there was Chris Pain, a member of the party's national executive and leader of their group on Lincolnshire council, who wrote the most disgustingly racist comments on Facebook. More recently there were party members and even branch officials who mocked Mr Lawrence as 'Saint Stephen' and said his grieving mother was 'boring us all to tears', on a UKIP forum. Writing on the same forum, just days after Mandela's death, one supporter said that some "base-born" people were "intended by nature" to be "slaves".

In fact, there have been literally dozens of party members exposed by the media but in most cases little or no action was taken. People were given the benefit of the doubt, comments were laughed off and many others totally ignored. One or two people have been disciplined or even expelled but these are the minority.


On several occasions UKIP have turned the allegations on its head. An NEC discussion about Chris Pain's disgusting comments focusing instead on a claim that HOPE not hate could have possibly hacked computers and left the incriminating message. And so fed up the party has become about our scrutiny and regular exposes that their conference voted to proscribe us.

Their autumn conference was overshadowed by the antics of Yorkshire MEP Godfrey Bloom, who - not for the first time - got himself embroiled in controversy. He hit a journalist, threatened a second and labelled female UKIP members as sluts. For this, he had the UKIP whip withdrawn. But

Factfile: UKIP and anti- Muslim hatred

At UKIP's recent Spring conference stewards tried to remove a journalist from the Daily Telegraph from a fringe meeting on Sharia Law. It seemed that the organisers were worried the world would hear about what was being said. And sure enough, the first question from the audience was: "How can you be both a Muslim and an English man?"

When this story hit the media, UKIP was quick to dismiss it as the words of just one man. However, the sentiments he expressed are widely shared by UKIP members and supporters. Here's a brief summary:




Nigel Farage called for a ban on the wearing of the burqa and niqab. A "different" culture, he told the BBC, was "being forced on parts of Britain and nobody wants that"



A 2012 YouGov poll found 82% of UKIP supporters are bothered by construction of a mosque in their neighbourhood, while only 2.1% would welcome it.




UKIP leader Nigel Farage said the UK should only accept Christian refugees from Syria, not Muslim refugees.



Several UKIP officials, candidates and activists have voiced support for the EDL, including the party's vice-chair in Scotland.

Gerald Batten, the UKIP's immigration spokesman and London MEP, argues that Muslims should sign a charter renouncing violence, proposes a ban on new mosques being built across Europe and says Qur'an needs rewriting.



85% of UKIP supporters believe that Islam poses a threat to Western Civilisation, while only 7.6% disagree.

In 2010 UKIP hosted anti-Muslim politician Geert Wilders in London



SAY N
TO EUROPEAN UNION

if people thought that was the end of Bloom's association with the party they were wrong. Only a few weeks ago he attended a UKIP meeting in Beverley and Holderness in the company of the Yorkshire regional chairman and Yorkshire regional manager.

And even at UKIP's spring conference, Farage sat through a comedy night at the recent UKIP spring conference during which a comedian came out with a succession of racist jokes and stereotypes. Asked about it afterwards, Farage claimed he did not hear the jokes.

This refusal to take racism seriously and act accordingly once it has been highlighted raises questions about the party leadership and its claim that it is not a racist organisation. Then, when its incendiary language about immigration and its strong attitudes against Islam and Muslims in general [see factfile] are added, leaves HOPE not hate with little option but to speak out against the party.

A different Britain

UKIP is mining a cultural fault line in Britain about the very society we want to live in. Farage's evocative description about parts of Britain becoming a foreign land sits well with 20% of society who bitterly oppose immigration and the changing face of Britain. Some of these people are out and out racists – and nothing we do will change this – but others are drawn to this position by their own economic insecurity and political alienation.

"UKIP are winning over the 'Left Behind' groups in British society: old, working class, men, with very few educational qualifications," says Matthew Goodwin. "These are voters who hold a very different set of values to the professional, middle-class majority: they are far more nationalist, Eurosceptic, fiercely opposed to immigration and feel like they have no voice in politics. They look out at a country they neither recognise nor want to be a part of."

While HOPE not

“While HOPE not hate will continue to expose UKIP's racism and anti-immigrant rhetoric we will also focus on defending and promoting the society we want to live in and the values by which we want to live by.”

hate will continue to expose UKIP's racism and anti-immigrant rhetoric we will also focus on defending and promoting the society we want to live in and the values by which we want to live by.

There is a fear that a UKIP victory in the European elections will force the Conservatives and Labour to swing to the right on immigration and multiculturalism in order to win UKIP voters back. This will both be politically and electorally wrong. Firstly, such is the distrust of the main parties that UKIP voters are unlikely to believe anything they say on immigration, and secondly, they risk alienating other elements of their respective electoral coalitions by doing so.

By building a movement to offer a more forward, positive and inclusive vision of Britain to challenge the UKIP discourse, HOPE not hate will seek to remind the mainstream political parties that UKIP speak to a minority of voters and that by running after them they risk alienating far bigger groups in society. We are

already starting to build up local groups in key marginal parliamentary seats in order to remind, push and punish local politicians if they veer to the right.

The mainstream parties would be much better to take on UKIP and address the underlying concerns of their supporters. For the Conservatives that is fairly easy: 'Vote UKIP and get Labour'. And, according to polling, it is a strategy that will work for most Conservative switchers to UKIP.

Clear strategy

For Labour, however, it is a more difficult task. There is still too much complacency that UKIP is a Conservative problem and there appears to be a dictat from Labour HQ for local parties to ignore them. This strategy will fail.

Ford and Goodwin's research shows that the white working class support for UKIP is much more resilient than the more affluent Eurosceptic support and this could hurt Labour in marginal seats it needs to win at the next election. Continually apologising for past mistakes over immigration just does not cut it. Nor, for that matter, will any Labour commitment to toughen its immigration stance as these voters just will not believe it and nor does it get to the core of their concerns.

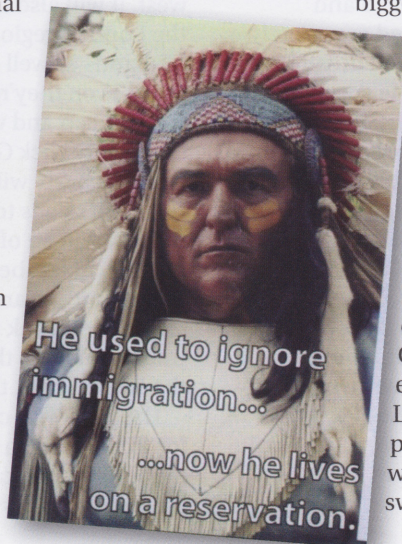
The research shows that driving support for UKIP among the white working class is economic pessimism, something a tougher immigration policy will do little to address in reality. Labour, like the unions, need to take on UKIP, both to show that UKIP's policy to cut taxes, privatise the NHS and remove employment and safety rights will do nothing to help those most in need, but also to offer a clear strategy that offers a better economic tomorrow for these people and their children.

Strangely, the Liberal Democrats could benefit most from this UKIP surge. By positioning themselves as the diametric opposite to UKIP and all it stands for the Lib Dems hope to win back some of their more progressive vote which has deserted them to Labour since entering Coalition, but also appeal to moderate Conservatives who will be alarmed at any further move to the right.

For HOPE not hate, the European elections are the first battle in a much longer cultural clash for the future of Britain. A year ago we were reluctant to take on UKIP, but now we feel we have little choice. In the absence of others defending our multiracial society, we have to, because if we do not then a UKIP victory becomes even more likely and the centre of political gravity heads right.

Nigel Farage's anti-immigrant speech at conference has ensured that UKIP is now firmly in HOPE not hate's sights.

The front cover of a UKIP leaflet delivered in the North West. Is this anything different from what the BNP or NF would deliver?



A poor back four

Matthew Collins charts the declining influence of Britain's far right parties

FIVE YEARS AGO the British National Party (BNP) filled column inches in Sydney, Bombay and Tokyo. The British had finally succumbed to the dubious charm of an extreme far-right party. "Inevitable" chimed Melbourne's *Herald Sun*, almost sneering that the auld country would elect to Europe's governing body a party that had only cosmetically altered its desire to fill the country with work camps and have a black clad racist militia dragging non-whites off for forcible deportation.

It was "inevitable" that Britain's liberal elite would finally pay the price for seemingly unfettered immigration, the resultant race riots and an imperialist island mentality and arrogance. In France and Italy they lamented that it was surely just a matter of time before we joined the rest of Europe in a domestic parliamentary dialogue of Holocaust denial, racism and backhanded compliments to the scourge of 1930s Europe, Nazism.

The council chambers of England hardly rattled to the mass sounds of the Horst Wessel, but there were some 60 individuals among a body of some 20,000 elected councillors representing a party radically opposed to both modern Britain and liberal democracy. It would be only a matter of time – a year to be exact – before that very party would surely take residence permanently in the Palace of Westminster and like mould in the bathroom, we'd have to learn to live with it. The BNP was already polling a credible 6% nationally.

And what a machine the BNP was. It could've had four, even five MEPs. It was dastardly and vulgar and almost criminally moronic, but it was becoming

part of the political mainstream. And yet as the two victorious BNP MEPs, Nick Griffin and Andrew Brons, ran from a press conference covered in egg yoke outside Westminster in 2009, the BNP was already in trouble.

The first order of the day in their new offices, paid for with European money, was to file unpaid bills away and out of sight. The next was to reward a whole swathe of Johnny come lately members with jobs on the party payroll. Within a year, as the party set its sights on at least one seat in Westminster and control of at least one metropolitan council, old and historic as well as new and fresh wounds were open and gaping badly in the party. On the eve of the 2010 general and local elections, the party website was pulled by a disgruntled member. The party's leaflet designer had only just been sacked and questioned by police over an alleged plot to murder Nick Griffin. Come polling day the BNP was in electoral retreat.

Battered, bruised and removed from seats they already held and unceremoniously dumped completely from local government and dreams of a seat in Parliament by the good people of Barking and Dagenham, the BNP imploded on the very floor of the count. Griffin came to "rescue" his defeated councillors and candidates but most of them left by the back door, thumbing their noses at the offer of a lift out of their own town.

Five years on from his last electoral outing and Nick Griffin is telling the *New York Times*, sent to write his political obituary, that the BNP is in defensive mode. "We were in survival mode for a couple of years. We have clearly survived."



Survived? Well, it just about has. Millions of pounds squandered, allegations of corruption, sackings, defections, mounting legal bills, tussles with vengeful paramilitaries, winding up orders and even personal bankruptcy for Griffin, testimony that "survived" is just about all you could say for the BNP and how it has fired since securing close to a million votes in 2009.

Gross waste

The BNP will limp to the Euro polls this May. As well as Griffin in the north west, it will also have candidates in the London region, Yorkshire and the Midlands as well as possibly a few other seats. Even they're still not too sure how many it can and will stand. But it is really only Nick Griffin's seat in the north west the party will truly be focused on. The BNP needs to get Griffin re-elected to maintain an office staff and indeed an office. Members may be short on the ground, as are activists, but one should not think their obvious financial traumas means there is no money for the BNP to fight this election.

The party has campaigned rigorously for three years in Cumbria and has made sporadic forays into areas outside the two big cities of Manchester



Paul Golding will be calling on the massed ranks of the Uber patriots in an attempt to unseat Griffin

and Liverpool. A symptom of the party's declining will and confidence, however, was the gross waste of serious electioneering opportunities in the recent Wythenshawe by-election to concentrate on antagonising UKIP members, including their leader Nigel Farage.

The BNP will focus strongly on the grooming of young children in the region by the predominately Muslim grooming gangs, throwing money where they do not have activists to deliver their message of hate.

Their other MEP, Yorkshire and Humberside's Andrew Brons, jumped ship in October 2012 after almost a year of being ostracised from the party. Last year he took his supporters off to form a rival group, the British Democratic Party (BDP). The BDP feel electorally there is little point in fighting the Euros, given the strength of the UKIP "juggernaut". Well, that is the external message, anyway. Internally the party is squabbling as to whether it should try and fill the retiring Brons's seat with somebody else or to scupper the BNP's Marlene Guest, who is standing as the BNP candidate for the region. Lethargy and recreational drinking have replaced political desires in the party.

Having only spent £150 on political campaigning last year, the BDP certainly has enough money in its coffers. Brons, however, would prefer the party to focus on local elections, allow him to retire gracefully on a handsome pension he has accumulated over his working life, and to take speaking engagements overseas.

The English Dems (EDs) have almost completely fallen from the political spectrum. In 2010 and 2011 large numbers of BNP members, somewhere in the region of 600, moved en masse into the party. With them came problems. The BNP were radicalised and racist, the EDs were ostensibly a middle class group who defined England and Englishness in culinary and circus terms. Their idea of village greens and an English Parliament were polluted by ambitious village idiots, but also by two of the BNP's better operators: elections guru Eddy Butler and Yorkshire-based Nazi Chris Beverley, both employees of the BDP's Andrew Brons.

In Feb 2013, the jewel in the party's crown, the Mayor of Doncaster, quit the party citing the increase in extremism in the party since the influx of BNP members. Desperate, it found itself seeking fundraising from the BNP's

former financial guru and a merger with renegade factions of the English Defence League (EDL). Unsurprisingly, their votes have also plummeted. It now sends a mixed message as being a novelty concern with a vulgar almost comic book hatred of immigrants, the Irish and Scottish.

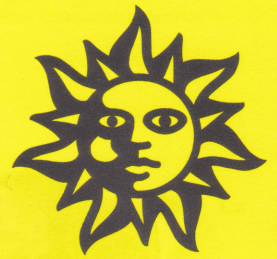
Stunts

The party leader Robin Tilbrook is serious enough to ensure they could stand a full slate of candidates, putting out some 12m pieces of literature to the electorate, but other than in Yorkshire where Beverley is standing, we are highly unlikely to see the party register anything mildly interesting.

Britain First (BF) is this election's spoiler. Run and staffed by former high level BNP personnel it has a confrontational and distorted evangelical message which predicts a doomsday scenario between Christians and Muslims. The two men behind the group, Jim Dowson and Paul Golding, are notorious for pulling stunts, Dowson in Northern Ireland and Golding on the streets of London where he recently launched 'Christian Patrols' in an attempt to antagonise Islamists who operate in parts of the capital.

Other than Muslims, much of Dowson and Golding's hatred is directed toward the BNP and Nick Griffin in particular. Dowson will bankroll Golding to stand against Nick Griffin in the north west where Golding will present himself as a defender of Christian morality and virtue, particularly in light of grooming scandals in the region. Their sole intent, however, appears to be to unseat Griffin.

Euro elections: 2014 the HOPE not hate campaign



Migrant voters standing up to the politics of hate and fear

By Elisabeth Pop

CENTRAL AND Eastern European migrants living in the UK are self-organising ahead of the 2014 EU elections. They have been spurred into action by David Cameron's proposal in early January 2014 to stop in-work child benefits for migrants working in Britain and by the hate media which scapegoated them for all the ills in British society.

But the Polish, Romanian and Bulgarian communities in the UK have also been joined by some of the UK's largest and more established European diasporas — the Italians, the Spanish and the Germans — all of whom feel very strong about the need to stand up and help defeat UKIP and Eurosceptic Tory candidates in the May election. There are talks about engaging the French, Greek, Hungarian and Slovak communities as well.

In all, these angry and frustrated EU nationals account for 2.4 million EU migrants contributing to the British economy and society.

The Polish campaign, called "Vote! You are at home", has already been launched by a coalition of community groups headed by the Federation of Poles in Great Britain. They have already engaged with the Polish community with letters stating: "This may be your last chance to vote in Britain" and "Your future and that of your family, community and friends may depend on it" — a clear

reminder of the Conservative promise of a referendum on the EU membership of the UK by 2017.

The Federation is hoping to reach 450,000 compatriots who have the right to vote in the UK. Of those, just 250,000 are believed to be registered, according to the federation.

They have also joined forces with the Romanian Cultural Centre in London, the Federation of Italian Associations in the UK and the New Europeans civil project to mobilise EU citizens residing in the UK to vote in the Local and European elections which take place on 22 May 2014.

Roger Casale, Chairman of New Europeans, said: "There is a lot at stake in this year's European Parliamentary elections. By the time of the next EU elections in 2019, the UK may have left it", in case the referendum in 2017 goes ahead and the British vote for the UK to leave the EU.

"As a consequence, the EU citizens might lose their right to live, work and vote in Britain," stressed Roger Casale.

Manfredi Nulli, speaking on behalf of the Italian community in Britain, said his compatriots across the country were now pledging their support for the initiative: "We believe less than half of Italians voted in the UK European elections in 2009, so we are hoping to make significant increases on that".

Oana Romoncea, coordinating the PR for the campaign and the spokesperson for the Romanian community added: "In the past few weeks, the Romanian Cultural Centre has approached over 100 key contacts in the Romanian student organisations, diasporic media, churches and cultural organisations in the UK asking them to mobilise for voter registration and turn out."

"This year's European Parliamentary elections will find the largest number of Romanian citizens living, working or studying in another EU country.

It is essential that these Romanian citizens are aware of their right

to vote in the country where they are currently residing and are familiar with the necessary procedures for voter registration. This information will enable them to exercise this key democratic right of taking part in elections. The New Europeans and the Romanian Cultural Centre have joined efforts to reach out to the 120,000 Romanians currently living in the UK", Oana Romoncea added.

Besides sending bilingual newsletters to all these EU migrant communities, detailing why it is important to register to vote and how to go about it, there are plans for mass social networking campaigns, appeals in churches and among student groups as well as leaflets detailing candidates' attitudes towards Europe at polling booths on election day.

Even before this voter registration drive, there were signs of the Romanian and Bulgarian migrant communities self-organising against the tidal wave of hate coming their way. At the end of last year, Dr. Tommy Tomescu and Mr. Emil Rusanov set up the Alliance Against Romanian and Bulgarian Discrimination (AARBD). Dr. Tomescu, a Romanian dentist working in the UK since 2010, feels that the British people are very tolerant and an open minded society, but that the media and too many politicians "decided that it is best to act in their self-interest and obtain a short political gain or larger readership, even if in the long term they will hurt the UK interest by portraying the country as an unfair place. The history has shown us that the politicians which are having as an electoral strategy the denigration of a group of people are losing on the long term."

According to the Electoral Commission only 56% of the EU migrants residing in UK are currently registered to vote, compared with 84% of UK nationals.

The turnout for the last European election in 2009 was 15.7 million, or 34.7% of the electorate, which means a mass migrant vote could have a significant impact on the outcome of the poll. Any EU migrant who is a permanently resident in Britain can vote in the election.

David Cameron's proposal to stop in-work child benefits for migrants and the hate media has spurred migrants living in UK into action



Campus call-out

By Owen Jones

CAMPUS CALL-OUT is a campaign aimed to engage and mobilise the student vote. Over a fortnight in March, there will be events at almost 40 colleges across the country in order to raise awareness about the elections, encourage voter registration and recruit more activists to HOPE not hate.

We have developed a Campus Call-Out pack, which is being sent to each participating college. Each pack contains leaflets, T-shirts, posters, badges, stickers, voter registration forms and bunting.

Students are natural allies in the battle against fear and hate but voter registration and turnout is low. It is estimated that only 50% of registered students voted at the last general election, far fewer in the 2009 European elections.

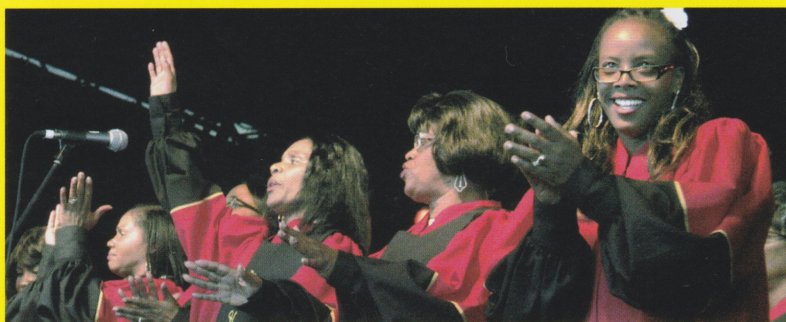
Worse still, it is estimated that 33% of all young people in full-time education are not actually registered to vote.

With voter turnout so low, encouraging students to register and vote could make a huge difference.

■ To find out more about Campus Call-Out and to receive a pack for use at your own college, please contact Owen at owen@hopenothate.org.uk

Faith communities mobilise for Souls to the Polls

By Elisabeth Pop



FOR YEARS NOW, the practice of going to church on the last Sunday before election day and then going together, as a community, to vote has become a fundamental African American tradition.

Community leaders speak about a democratic tradition of teaching young people and those who are apathetic, that you can't just sit on the side-lines criticising your leaders if you don't actually vote.

In the UK, HOPE not hate has approached Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh communities to encourage voter registration and mobilise voter turnout for the 2014 Local and EU elections.

With anti-migrant rhetoric being ratcheted up almost daily by the media and politicians and changes to voter registration likely to lead to a massive drop off in the electorate in urban areas, HOPE not hate, in conjunction with London Churches Social Action, organised a Souls to the Polls event on 17 February. Hosted by the Diocese of Southwark, the event saw the participation of fifteen Christian and three non-Christian leaders from across London.

The key speaker was Carlos Saavedra, former National Organiser of United We Dream, a campaign that forced President Obama to create a pathway to citizenship

for 11 million undocumented students. Not only was this one of the most amazing campaigns of recent times, it also enjoyed the involvement of faith organisations.

The three hour-long seminar focused on how faith communities can push back at the current growing toxic and racist atmosphere. It also explored where HOPE not hate, in collaboration with Christian leaders of all denominations, can organise events in local communities around a more positive and inclusive agenda. Discussion about what role faith communities can play in mobilising voter registration and turnout, and ultimately in securing the Britain we all want to live in, had already taken place with leaders of the Jewish, Muslim and Sikh communities in the UK.

Against the incessant barrage of anti-migrant headlines and the anti-migrant statements of politicians from both the right and left political spectrums, it is easy to feel deflated and believe nothing can be done. But that is not necessarily true. HOPE not hate believes that if we are organised, focused and above all motivated we can and should make a difference in the upcoming elections.

The HOPE not hate Souls to the Polls campaign is due to take place between 9 and 11 May.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT FOR HOPE

Be the difference
Let's defeat hate in the European Elections
www.hopenothate.org.uk

HOPE not hate: the story so far

Defeated hate in local communities

Not in my name

Banned

Partners

We Are The Many

Plague on both houses

Hands off!

Rethink

AN APOLOGY

51-0

Built community resilience

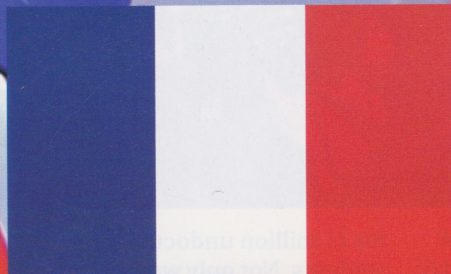
HOPE not hate

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IF YOU WANT TO TAKE A STAND AGAINST RACISM AND DEFEND OUR MULTICULTURAL AND DIVERSE BRITAIN, THEN PLEASE DO GET INVOLVED EMAIL OFFICE@HOPENOTHATE.ORG.UK

Le Pen predicted to

By Graeme Atkinson and Jean-Yves Camus



Euro-elections: France

NOW THAT FRENCH president François Hollande has definitively taken on the role of villain in the French political pantomime, following his atrocious treatment of former First Lady Valérie Trierweiler and his even more atrocious treatment of the French economy and society, the still relatively new leader of the right-wing Front National (FN), Marine Le Pen, looks set to emerge as the star turn from the European elections in France at the end of May.

Since she began fronting the FN in 2011, Le Pen has gone to great lengths to give her rightwing extremist party a superficial makeover while retaining its inner substance as a deeply unpleasant and racist political formation.

Part of the respray has involved sidelining her volcanic and oft-convicted father Jean-Marie Le Pen whose name has become inseparable from the FN brand, even to the point of handing him orders about whom he should collaborate with internationally.

Le Pen's cosmetic changes have been wide ranging enough to expand its membership base from around 15,000 to an estimated 52,000 and to begin to give the party the kind of professional glaze it has previously never quite managed to acquire. Since Le Pen took over, the FN has implanted itself nationwide, opening 125 local offices in 2013.

This has provided a more stable infrastructure for the FN's campaigning on its usual potent mixture of pet themes of opposition to the EU and the Euro, tax cuts, law and order, tougher justice, unemployment, Islam and immigration which it wants to restrict to 10,000 a year.

Coached by her high-flying spin-doctor and strategist, Florian Philippot, Le Pen has also made herself more media friendly. This has paid off: a TNS-Sofres poll for *Le Monde* and *Canal +* in early February indicated that as many as 34% of French people agree with Le Pen's ideas.

Another recent poll suggested that 23% of voters would vote FN in the May elections, putting the party ahead of the hapless Hollande and Jean-François Copé's colourless conservatives for the first time ever and glaringly reflecting the widespread disaffection with Brussels and mounting paranoia about the supposed erosion of French culture and identity. Should the FN notch up a score of 23%, its tally of seats in Strasbourg would rise from its present three to 17.

Threat to democracy

The idea that this would represent some kind of "earthquake" is a media myth. While it would undoubtedly signify a major boost for the far right in France and internationally, the near-protest character of European elections means it is highly unlikely in domestic elections where party voting has real impacts and real outcomes.

If the FN does win through in the European elections, though, Copé's conservative UMP will probably continue its futile policy of borrowing the FN's ideas in an attempt to win back voters lost to Le Pen.

This tactic has failed miserably so far and this where ex-president Nicolas Sarkozy comes into the picture. His only sound prospect of winning the UMP

primary and then a presidential election is if he can present himself as the only person capable of defeating the left and Le Pen at the same time.

His line will be to tell conservative voters: "If you do not want a second ballot between Hollande and Le Pen (which would mean an easy re-election for Hollande), then you should endorse my candidacy".

The ruling Socialist Party has no strategy on the FN. One reason for that is that there is no unity in the cabinet and Hollande is widely perceived as a weak President with a weak prime minister.

Meanwhile, swathes of the French electorate remain unconvinced by Le Pen's lurch towards "moderation". Fifty percent of interviewees in the TNS-Sofres still view the FN as a threat to democracy and 43%, in the same poll believe it represents the "nationalistic, xenophobic extreme right".

Another survey by IPSOS found that 69% regard the FN as a "far right party". Further, a massive majority does not favour her calls to dump the Euro and restore the Franc, and an even bigger one rejects her demands for laws that would grant French nationals privileges over foreigners in employment and access to social benefits.

The situation for Le Pen may not be quite as promising as it sometimes appears. Municipal elections are scheduled for the last weekend in March. The FN hopes to stand in about 500 municipalities, a significant increase on 2008, when it ran lists in just 78 cities with more than 3,500 inhabitants, winning an average 5.5 per cent and taking just

win in Euro-poll

59 seats out of a possible 90,000.

To date, only 120 full lists have been announced, reflecting the party's ongoing grassroots weakness, increases in membership notwithstanding. Current polls give the FN 9% in these elections but the more cities where the FN candidate can contest the second ballot, the fewer the conservatives can win because three-way races are rather good for the left, the right-wing vote being riven.

Political controversies could also conspire to torpedo Le Pen's efforts to repackage her party because the old far right have been hampered by political controversies. Last autumn, the party was engulfed in a scandal when an FN candidate likened the Justice Minister Christiane Taubira to a monkey on national TV. Also, new recruits have abandoned the party citing rampant antisemitism, sexism and homophobia among its members. Le Pen has been visibly reluctant to condemn antisemitism and Holocaust denial by her father's friend, the racist black comedian Dieudonné, and same-sex marriage are a simmering issues.

Some of these issues are spilling into the streets, sometime violently. Demonstrations against same-sex marriage have been an almost daily occurrence in France since the beginning of 2013.

Two far-right umbrella organizations, La manif pour tous (LMPT) and Printemps français, steer a movement that fights against Socialist-sponsored legislation on gender issues gay rights and women's rights.

Fringe groups

Both movements have a strong Catholic Traditionalist flavour, the former enjoying the support of several bishops and the latter being closer to Catholic fundamentalist Lefebvrist circles. While LMPT is careful to stay away from right-wing extremist fringe groups which have caused havoc at the end of several demonstrations, Printemps français is a much more radical movement, whose leader Béatrice Bourges, was on hunger strike in January to demand that president François Hollande be impeached by parliament, because his policies "are a frontal assault on traditional values".

In this context, Printemps français has tried to create a French Tea Party movement, having urged opponents of the Socialist-Green government to go into the streets on 26 January under the motto 'Day of Rage'. On the day, around 30,000 people marched in Paris, some of them protesting against high taxes and the "big state", others with a Catholic agenda of restoring traditional family values, and the more radical demanding Hollande's immediate resignation.

Many openly fascist groups took part, among them GUD,

Renouveau français, the royalist Action Française activists and even Oeuvre française and the Jeunesse nationaliste, who were outlawed in Summer 2013. FN members were also heavily present.

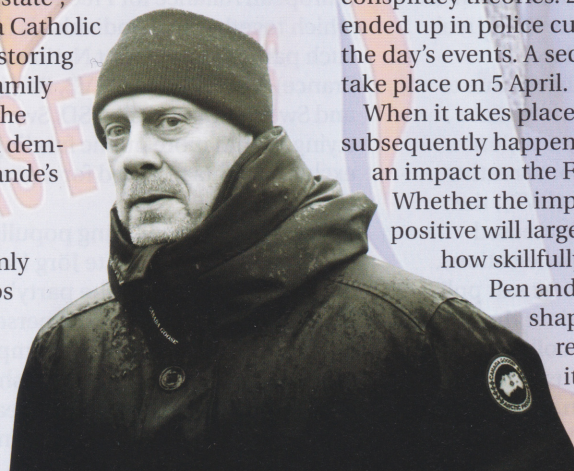
The shocking novelty was that alongside this rabble, whose racism and hatred of immigrants are well documented, were several hundred fans of the antisemitic comedian Dieudonné, chanting "Jews, France is not yours" and other anti-Jewish slogans. The mastermind of this alliance between the extreme right and radical Muslims who support Dieudonné is the would-be novelist Alain Soral.

A self-proclaimed "National-Socialist" who until 2009 belonged to the FN, Soral is now becoming a high-profile activist. Though he is outspokenly anti-Jewish and flirts with Holocaust denial, his movement Egalité et Réconciliation is attracting a growing number of so-called 'anti-Zionists' who share the fascist and Catholic fundamentalist taste for conspiracy theories. 250 violent activists ended up in police custody at the end of the day's events. A second such day will take place on 5 April.

When it takes place and what subsequently happens could well have an impact on the FN's campaign.

Whether the impact will be positive will largely depend on how skillfully and how far Le Pen and Philippot can shape the public response. Otherwise, it could be a disaster waiting to happen.

Alain Soral





Euro-elections: Austria

FPÖ bids for second place

From Martin Jordan in Vienna



(second from left) Andreas Mölzer, Heinz-Christian Strache and Harald Vilimsky

THE ONLY far-right force in Austria that can be considered a serious challenger in the 2014 EU elections is the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ). Besides the FPÖ, however, there are two other right-wing outfits in the race: the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ) and the Reform-Conservatives (REKOS).

The FPÖ's two top candidates are Andreas Mölzer (an MEP since 2004) and Harald Vilimsky. Third on the list is Franz Obermayr (MEP since 2009). Vilimsky, 48, an MP since 2006 and acting FPÖ secretary-general, was fielded to rejuvenate the FPÖ faction in Brussels. Opinion polls show the party at around 23% and predict a 10% increase on the 2009 election, making the FPÖ a real contender for second place.

Despite electoral setbacks due to the FPÖ's miserable performance as a ruling party in the coalition government with the conservative Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), the party's popularity has increased over the last two national elections. Looking at last year's voter exit poll demographics, it is evident the FPÖ has become the new 'blue-collar workers' party' occupying what used to be the SPÖ's exclusive domain.

Party leader Heinz-Christian Strache has said the FPÖ will "teach a lesson"

to the mainstream parties in the EU election. Domestically, Strache hopes to win protest votes with his main campaign themes: a re-nationalisation of EU politics, a halt to immigration and abolition of the Euro. On the European level, the FPÖ wants to be a leading force in forming a common right-wing movement inside the EU. Mölzer, a leading figure in the pan-German nationalist wing of the FPÖ, was architect of the previously failed attempt to establish the far-right political group 'Identity, Tradition, Sovereignty' in the EU Parliament. The FPÖ is a member of the European political party, the 'European Alliance for Freedom' (EAF), which together with individuals from such parties as the Front National (FN, France), Vlaams Belang (VB, Belgium) and Sweden Democrats (SD, Sweden), is trying to gain more public funding and exclusive rights reserved for so-called 'Europarties'.

The BZÖ is a right-wing populist party founded by the late Jörg Haider after he quit the FPÖ. The party's strategy was focused on the personality cult around Haider, which crumbled after his fatal drunk driving crash in 2008. Since then, it has lost its seats in the national parliament and opinion polls show it at less than 1%.



Euro-elections: Hungary

Jobbik gears up for home and Euro-elections

István Tóth reports from Budapest

KRISZTINA MORVAI has been chosen to front the candidates' list of the fascist Jobbik party in the European Parliament elections, because - according to the party - "she has already proven her worth for the Hungarian nation with her relentless commitment and honest agenda".

Morvai also led the list in 2009 when the party caused a shock by sending three representatives to the European Parliament. Referring to her non-membership of Jobbik, party leader Gábor Vona said: "We represent the same standpoint in nearly all issues regarding the EU-Hungary relationship." Morvai is infamous for her antisemitic outbursts.

Jobbik is calling for a referendum on the relationship between the European Union (EU) and Hungary. In addition to asking voters whether or not Hungary should remain an EU member, the referendum will also elicit citizens' opinion as to what form of membership they want.

Jobbik's performance in the Euro-elections will be shaped by its results in the 6 April national election where it is forecast to win 12 seats, an apparent loss compared with its current tally of 43 but, in fact, entirely due to a drastic reduction in the number of MPs from 386 to 199. Opinion polls show Jobbik's support rising.



Krisztina Morvai

At present, Jobbik is hurrying to respray its nazi image. One of its latest posters depicts an idyllic family scene with smiling faces and the main slogan 'The future cannot be stopped!'. Jobbik is popular among the youth, the middle aged and the elderly. Vona flatters the latter, calling them his "eternally young people who have maintained their young hearts".

Postal votes

At the party's 'state of the nation' event in Budapest in January, Vona declared that his party wants to "overthrow the entire 24-year period since the change of (the Communist) regime" in the April election. The three main goals of the programme would focus on people's livelihoods, public order and political accountability.

Jobbik has made postal votes for expatriates a major issue, claiming it is unacceptable that while ethnic Hungarians can vote by mail in Hungary, Hungarians resident in another country are only allowed to vote at embassies or consular offices.

On 27 January, Vona went to London hoping to hold a big pro-postal votes rally near Holborn tube station but about 200 anti-fascist protesters made him and a ragbag of about 100 Jobbik supporters flee to Hyde Park where they held a meeting at Speaker's Corner.

HOPE for Hungary

By Elisabeth Pop

ALMOST EVERY time you open a newspaper and you read news from Hungary it is either some terrible story about neo-Nazi marches in Roma villages or Jobbik orchestrating their latest stunt against the Jewish community. Or about Hungarian President Viktor Orbán changing the constitution and reinforcing his autocratic rule while the economy is in crisis.

There is violent abuse and discrimination against Roma in Hungary, a sense of Hungarian people still struggling with owning up to their involvement in the Holocaust, and a government unwilling to crack down on a Nazi party, the third largest political force in Hungary.

However, there are some positive stories we rarely get to read about, encouraging signs of Hungarian civil society standing up to hate. Based in Budapest, the Foundation of Subjective Values (Szubjektív Értékek Alapítvány) or Subjective is at the heart of this movement. Co-founder Bálint Jóna feels strongly about multicultural integration through arts, sports, entrepreneurship and media, by running campaigns for tolerance, inter-ethnic dialogue, non-formal education programs and general anti-discrimination grassroots work.

Subjective has run a number of big anti-racism events, the latest a campaign around the Chinese New Year that brought together almost 10,000 people, only a third of whom were Chinese people living in Budapest and the rest curious Hungarians willing to learn more about this growing community.

Since 2010, Subjective has also run the Music against Racism festival, a yearly concert which has reached 200,000 young people in Sziget and in Budapest. They also hold regular commemorations, film nights and roundtable discussions on key human and civil rights topics of the day for Hungary, in an attempt to educate and mobilise and bring people together.

This year, the EU elections come just three weeks after the Hungarian general elections. Bálint tells me they've already mapped the areas in which Jobbik and the Hungarian Dawn are set to get some good results. They have decided to focus on several Roma communities and mobilise them to be more active. The hope is that if these vulnerable communities speak up then the majority Hungarian ethnic – Magyar – population might decide to stand up to hate and vote on 25 May. Discussions in these communities are scheduled, as well as leaflets and action days focussed on the stories of young Hungarian Roma which contrast Jobbik's "endemic Gypsy criminality" campaign.

Bálint says the progressive political campaigning message will be at the heart of everything they do – from the No Hate Speech campaign to the national anti-racism march due to take place in all European capitals, Budapest included, on 21 March, to the community training sessions, football related events and human rights movie nights. So, there is still HOPE for Hungary, irrespective of the results at the fast approaching EU elections!





Euro-elections: Spain

New parties, old faces

From Sandra Cortés in Madrid for Antifeixistes-org

SINCE SPAIN joined the European Union in 1986, no far right party has succeeded in securing election to the European Parliament. For the coming election, the far right vote again looks divided, with the emergence of a new right-wing composed of former members of the Popular Party (PP), which has ruled Spain since 2011. Not all far right parties are standing: the fascist Platform for Catalonia (PxC) and España2000 have already announced they will not be contesting the election.

Another hardcore fascist party, the Republican Social Movement (MSR), has spent years fielding candidates in Euro-elections and is one of the best internationally-connected segments of the Spanish far right, despite only having a local councillor and winning

just 0.04% of the vote in the 2009 European. The MSR, the only Spanish member of Nick Griffin's Alliance of European National Movements, is basically Spanish nationalist, anti-immigration, anti-EU and wants to ditch the Euro. Several of its previous candidates were tried and convicted of being part of the now-banned nazi group, Blood&Honour, in 2010.

The other far right challenger will be the fascist Spain on the March (LEM) alliance, formed by the National Alliance (AN), National Democracy (DN), La Falange led by Manuel Andrino, the Spanish Catholic Movement (MCE) and Spanish Patriot Knot (NPE). Members violently attacked a Catalan government conference in Madrid last September and one of its leaders, AN boss Pedro Pablo Peña, has even said that armed struggle is "the solution" to Catalan separatism.

None of these groups are likely to get anywhere in May.

The ruling conservative Popular Party (PP) has brought together almost

the whole spectrum of the right, from liberals to right-wing Francoists, preventing the emergence of a bigger far-right party able to capture the rightist vote. But new populist parties with a more radical approach are threatening it.

Solucion is a case in point, a new project led by journalist Enrique de Diego, the former member of Plataforma per Catalunya (PXC) Gerard Bellalta (convicted for selling bogus work contracts to immigrants), and director of the Islamophobic and right-wing web portal AlertaDigital. Solucion opposes the EU's austerity policies, wants to ban separatist organisations and stop immigration, especially of Muslims.

Another new party called Vox has been launched by Ortega Lara, a former PP member of the PP and prison officer who was kidnapped by the Basque ETA movement, together with another senior member of the PP in Catalonia, Alejo Vidal-Quadras. Vox's main focus is on maintaining the unity of Spain and opposing against immigration.

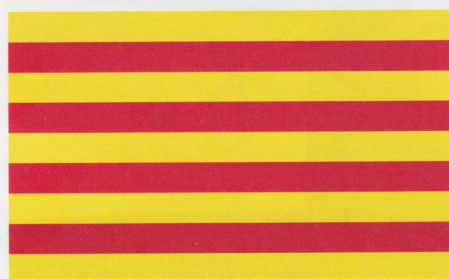


Carmen Martín Padial

Complex politics in Catalonia

By Mar Carrera SOS Racisme Catalunya

Euro-elections: Catalonia



CATALONIA is experiencing a rising level of far right activity, generating hatred and fear that are being translated into support for the xenophobic Platform for Catalonia (PxC), as well as other far right parties. In order to build an awareness of PxC and other parties' racist speech and activities at local level, SOS Racism has created the Observatory on Racist and Xenophobic Policies of Catalan Municipalities (OPRAX.CAT).

The new body will gather data about xenophobic actions and policies implemented in Catalan municipalities. The information will come from local organisations and comprehensive analysis of the media, websites and blogs etc. The tools and sources of the observatory will include

the media, social networks, political parties and local organisations.

Together with organisations across Catalonia, SOS Racism is planning a public awareness campaign to counter the xenophobic vote in the 2014 Euro-elections, emphasising the positive aspects of different ethnic groups. The message, communications strategy and actions on a local level during the campaign will be designed in conjunction with local organisations. SOS Racism will also work with traditional media (news conferences, formal and informal meetings with journalists), creating news around the actions of the campaign via interviews in the national media and through social networks (viral videos, banners, Facebook campaigning etc.).



Free ride for the PVV

By Jeroen Bosch for *Alert!* and Antifa-Net in Amsterdam

Euro-elections:
Netherlands

THE DUTCH PARLIAMENT has handed Geert Wilders' right-wing populist Freedom Party (PVV) a perfect campaign tool in the run-up to the European Elections, preparations having started a year ago when the PVV asked parliament if its research costs could be paid from state funding for political parties. While every political party represented received money from the taxpayer, the rules state explicitly that this money is not meant for campaigning.

Last year, however, the PVV was granted research costs from the state on condition it would only be used for PVV parliamentarians themselves and not for campaigning purposes. Wilders promptly commissioned Capital Economics' researcher, Mark Pragnell, to compile a report on the EU and continued Dutch membership.

He was kicking at an open door, Pragnell having already stated that he was "pretty confident" exit from the EU would be of net benefit to the Netherlands. When the report was released in February, Wilders duly passed a €270,000 (£225,000) invoice to the taxpayer.

Wilders' aim has been to acquire a political instrument to turn the EU-elections into an 'In or Out' of the EU ballot and exert his monopoly on the 'Out' side. Pragnell's report has provided him with this.

Election propaganda

It became even better for him when a new parliamentary vote further loosened rules about party funding, with parties themselves now deciding what can and cannot be used for their parliamentarians. The only party to vote against? The PVV which, it seems, can still oppose subsidies but have its own way with costly taxpayer-funded research.

The PVV report will figure endlessly in Wilders' election propaganda. It states, for example, that over a 21-year period every Dutch household would benefit by as much as €9,800 (£8,000) annually if the Netherlands left the EU and negotiated a similar status to Switzerland. The Swiss have access to the internal European market and all the export benefits without being a member of the EU. However the Swiss are bound by EU free competition and product standards rules. A stronger anti-immigration policy, the report claims, could provide an additional benefit of €7 billion (£5.75 billion), but that is not likely to happen given the political landscape in the Netherlands and its international treaty obligations.

Whether the remaining EU-countries would give the Netherlands a similar status to Switzerland if it left the EU (and the Euro) is another matter.



Euro-elections: Germany

Nationalist EU-criticism and anti-immigrant issues top far right agenda

From Michael Klein in Berlin for Antifa-Net

WITH THE EUROPEAN elections just months away, the far right has already started campaigning across Germany. The Nazi National Democrats (NPD) are agitating strongly against the European Union which they label as being simultaneously a Soviet-style "empire" and the prototype of neoliberal capitalism.

Immigration and asylum is the second issue the NPD is concentrating on. In several places, party activists have been at the forefront of hate campaigns against refugees. In some cases, they have been quite successful, for example in Schneeberg where more than 1,000 local citizens followed the Nazis' call for protest action rally. Former party leader, Udo Voigt, is the NPD's lead candidate for the Euro-elections.

The so-called PRO movement, a racial nationalist group with a stronghold in North-Rhine Westphalia, has started its campaign under the slogan "Your voice for Europe against Islamisation". They will have no chance of entering the parliament but will make use of their campaigning for local elections also taking place this year.

The fading Republikaner party, which once had representation in the state parliament of Baden-Württemberg in the 1990s, is another mouthpiece of nationalist animosity to the EU as well as towards immigration and a multicultural society. A long-term party activist, Hermann Mack, is heading its candidate's list.

The NPD, Republikaner and PRO – if they all stand – will find it a struggle but might just manage to win seats

in the European Parliament now that the Constitutional Court has reduced the traditional election hurdle of 5% to just 1%. Most likely to prosper from this move, however, is the EU-sceptic and nationalist Alternative for Germany (AfD) which registered 5% in polls in February. Founded just a year ago, the AfD polled 4.7% in last autumn's national elections and is building a nationwide structure. Its top candidates are Professor of Economics Bernd Lucke and the former president of the Federation of German Industries, Hans-Olaf Henkel.

All these parties will play the nationalist anti-EU card as well as using anti-immigrant slogans to varying degrees. They oppose accession of Turkey to the EU and favour the reduction of European integration. With the AfD being the only one with realistic prospects of securing election to the European Parliament, alliance building becomes important. So far, party leader Lucke has denied any intention of entering any parliamentary group of right-wing parties. However, according to UKIP leader Nigel Farage, there have already been meetings of UKIP with high-ranking functionaries of the AfD.



Udo Voigt

Rightists go head-to-head

Michele Zacchi reports from Rome

MAY'S EUROPEAN elections, which take place in Italy under proportional representation, will be an opportunity to gauge the relative weakness of Italy's divided far right.

When ex-premier Silvio Berlusconi was in power, the right-wing was organised under the umbrella of the People of Freedom movement. However, fractures caused by former Alleanza Nazionale boss Gianfranco Fini and by Berlusconi's factional manoeuvring, have divided most of the groups which originate from the fascist MSI (Italian Social Movement).

On one hand, there is the Brothers of Italy (taken from the first words of the Italian national anthem), led by Giorgia Meloni, Ignazio La Russa and Guido Crosetto, who have recently enlisted far right former Rome mayor Gianni Alemanno and his team.

Against them, is Francesco Storace's The Right, in whose ranks one can find a wide array of political pond life from former ministers in Berlusconi's governments, to the remains of Future and Freedom – the party founded by Gianfranco Fini which did not field a single candidate in the last national elections – and Tricolour Flame which has been joined some members of Italian Golden Dawn. In this wing of the right, many dream of a rebirth of the MSI ... or at least the votes it used to enjoy 30 years ago.

Leadership fight

The two factions – Brothers of Italy and The Right – are battling not only over ownership of political space, but also over the rich financial heritage of the National Alliance (the formation that signalled the evolution of the MSI away from fascism towards right-wing conservatism).

On the anti-establishment right, two forces – convicted terrorist Roberto Fiore's Forza Nuova and Casa Pound – are wrestling for leadership. Both trace their roots back to 1919-1920, firmly believing that voluntarist fascist minorities can become engines of history. They loathe democracy and parliament, exhibit 'futurist' symbolism,



Euro-elections: Italy

Casa Pound supporters

encourage anti-bourgeois behaviour and promote youth cults.

Forza Nuova is traditionalist, a little crudely so for modern political reality, while Casa Pound is more attentive to the grandiose cultural characteristics of its actions.

Forza Nuova tried unsuccessfully to win legitimacy by taking part in the street protest movements ongoing in Italy but has since discovered the lure

of agriculture to establish the League of the Earth. It should be added that, electorally, the results of Forza Nuova have always been miserable.

Casa Pound hoped to better Forza Nuova electorally but the pitiful 0.8% it scored in Rome's elections last February only pushed it towards more radical choices, including sounding out partnership with the nazi Golden Dawn in Greece.

Last December, Rome was covered with posters promoting a joint demonstration between Casa Pound and Golden Dawn. Only 150 showed up and the slogan on the posters was 'Out with the immigrants'. Neither of these wings of the hard right is likely to profit in the European elections.

The populist and regionalist Lega Nord probably has the best prospects but is still only showing around 4% in the opinion polls.

Offering a positive alternative in Italy

By Claudio Tocchi

ONE OF THE biggest challenges organisers of pro-human rights activities and campaigns have to face is reaching a broad and diversified public. Seminars, conferences and single projects quite often target only a limited part of the society. Thus, social cohesion and inclusive messages are the most efficient remedy against racism and discrimination.

Bearing that in mind, alliance organisations, NGOs and local authorities are planning a series of events and activities in Turin on 21 March, the International day for the elimination of racial discrimination. The main goal being denouncing racism and discrimination from different perspectives, with different tools being used to engage with target groups.

The main event of the day is the conference on 'Racism in Europe and Italy' organized by CIE Piemonte (Centre for European Initiative of Piedmont), a non-

profit association working on European integration, human rights defence and anti-racism and discrimination. The conference will be an opportunity to present the latest European Network Against Racism shadow report on the state of racism in Europe and to open a discussion about its results among NGOs, academics and local, national and European institutions.

Moderated by La Stampa editor Mario Calabresi, the discussion panel will include Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament, a representative of the new Italian government, Luciano Scagliotti, President of CIE and director of the Italian ENAR National Platform, and Ilda Curti, councillor for multiculturalism and integration of the City of Turin. UNAR, the Italian National Equality Body, will continue its 10-year long tradition by organising awareness-raising activities in schools,

universities and workplaces during Anti-Racist Action Week.

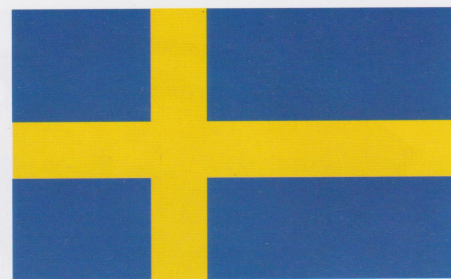
There will also be several grassroots activities around the theme of 'Turin awakes to anti-racist (Torino si sveglia antirazzista)', co-ordinated by youth association Trepuntozero. Through non-formal activities such as the living library, invisible theatre performances, public readings, the youth associations joining the campaign aim at engaging Turin residents in the streets.

We hope that these initiatives will help present a positive alternative for people who have been stuck in deep economic, social and political crisis for several years and convey the idea of solidarity and social cohesion, representing the best cure for mistrust and angst generated and generating racism.

● Claudio Tocchi is a journalist and human rights activist

SD weighs up choice of friends

From Daniel Vergara for *EXPO* in Stockholm



Euro-elections: Sweden

THE SWEDEN DEMOCRATS (SD) party surprised observers when it launched its candidate list for May's European elections because the two top names on the list, Kristina Winberg and Peter Lundgren, both from Småland, are barely known to the public. Party leader Jimmie Åkesson explained the SD's strange choice by arguing that the duo are not "professional politicians" and would appeal to voters.

The SD has not yet indicated what questions it wants to focus on in the European parliament if it manages to win any seats. Its first problem is to nudge SD supporters towards the polling booths. It is likely that the SD will win one or two seats in the election. The hitherto unknown Winberg and Lundgren bring little added value, however. At a press conference they had few answers and

scant evident knowledge of European politics to present. "We will practically have to go back to the school desk ... we come from municipal politics," admitted Lundgren.

Winberg has said that she has not discussed what policies the SD might have other than that it wants to enter the European Parliament and is Eurosceptic. The only clear policies the SD has presented are claims that the EU's membership contributions are too high and that national sovereignty is "important".

The SD has a history of dubious co-operation with a motley crew of European far right parties. Le Pen's Front National (FN) supported the party in its infancy, inviting speakers to France for rallies and helping to fund SD election campaigns. In 1999, the SD entered the – moribund as soon as it was formed –

European fascist bloc, Euro-Nat.

Nowadays, however, the SD is cagey about saying who it wants to co-operate with in Strasbourg and Brussels. The party now claims it will need to "research" parties like the FN. SD representatives, however, have recently been in meetings with the FN, the Belgian Vlaams Belang, the Austrian FPÖ and Geert Wilders from the Dutch Freedom Party.

The populist Danish People's Party has warned the SD against working with the FN if it wants to be in a group with the Danish party. An obstacle to that might be that SD MP Kent Ekeröth belongs to the pan-European Alliance for Freedom along with Marine Le Pen from the FN, the fascist Andreas Mölzer from FPÖ in Austria, Philip Claeys from the Vlaams Belang and also former UKIP member, Godfrey Bloom.

Eurosceptics wobble over EU

From Anne Jessen for *Demos* and Antifa-Net in Copenhagen

Euro-elections: Finland



THE POPULIST Finns Party, *aka* the True Finns, is running in May's elections to the European Parliament and is expected at least to replicate its result in the 2009 elections when its percentage of the vote leapt to 9.7% of the vote, winning it a single seat. In polls, it is now showing 16%. The same trend was visible in the Finnish parliamentary election of 2011 when it won an additional 34 seats, its total of 39 seats rocketing it to third largest party of Finland.

The Finns Party is, notionally, a strongly Eurosceptical party and, among other things, opposes financial aid for the Eurocrisis-hit southern European countries. It is not, however, at all sure about the consequences of a Finnish pullout from the Eurozone or indeed from the EU. This uncertainty is more political than economic and centres on security policy, the Finns generally having a pronounced fear of their Russian neighbours and a desire to be a part of a larger collaboration and to cement their European identity. The party is hostile to Finnish membership of

NATO, however. Domestically, it works for an unyielding immigration policy – it is strongly Islamophobic – and even wants to abolish the teaching of Swedish in Finnish schools.

Much party activity takes place on the internet. Many of its members happily take part on the right-wing website Hommaforum side by side with the extremist Soumen Sisu organisation. This outfit has nazi connections and touts Islamophobic ideology. A third of the Finns Party's 38 MPs are involved both in Hommaforum and Suomen Sisu. These same MPs have been very active in the radicalisation of the party's immigration policy.

Internationally, the party is linked with similarly xenophobic or populist formations like UKIP, the French Front National, the Vlaams Belang in Belgium, the Danish People's Party and so-called Freedom Parties in Austria and the Netherlands but whether it will want to become part of the much publicised Geert Wilders- Marine Le Pen coalition is so far unclear.

Bart De Wever
Flemish
nationalist party
N-VA



Far-right in survival battle

From Wim Haelsterman for
AFF/Verzet – RésistanceS in
Brussels

Euro-elections:
Belgium



BELGIANS WILL have lots of choice on 25 May. Members of the Chamber of Representatives will be elected but the Senate will no longer be directly elected following recent reforms of the Belgian state. Regional elections will be held as well as choosing representatives for the Flemish Parliament, the Walloon Parliament, the Brussels Parliament and the Parliament of the German-speaking Community. These elections will all be held on the same day as the European elections.

The 2010 national elections resulted in a shock victory for the Flemish nationalist party N-VA. Due to this spectacular outcome, the formation of a coalition took no fewer than 541 days, a world record in a democratic country. Eventually, politicians settled on political reforms and a government headed by Socialist Elio Di Rupo.

Elections on the federal (2010) and the local (2012) level were a nightmare for far right parties on both sides of the linguistic divide, the right-wing Flemish nationalist Vlaams Belang (VB) losing a lot of votes and representatives in the chamber and in the separate parliaments, as well as on the local level. The success of the moderate nationalist NV-A and the mainstream's *cordon sanitaire* around the VB explains why.

Ever since then, the VB, which has a lone MEP Philip Claes, has struggled to survive. New chairman Gerolf Annemans

has not been able to turn the tide and polls indicate that his party is continuing to lose popular support and will obtain barely 10% of the Flemish vote in May. In its glory days, the VB had 25% of votes and was the most popular Flemish party. Five years ago, the party still had 15% of votes. The party now faces losing its only Strasbourg seat.

The VB still advocates Flemish independence and has a stridently anti-Islam/anti-immigration programme, but the main issue facing it now is its own survival. In support of this, Annemans recently launched a 'We are still necessary' campaign, hoping to steal votes back from the NV-A. At New Year, he expressed the hope of remaining at least as politically significant as the Flemish Green Party.

Trying to grab media attention, the VB announced that it would participate in the Walloon campaign. One of the party's candidates in the region is Philip Dewinter's daughter. Dewinter, still seen as the real leader of the party, will lead the party's list of candidates for the federal chamber in the Antwerp district.

The Francophone far right has been clinically dead since the last elections. It is uncertain whether any far right party will participate in the elections in French-speaking Belgium. Recent attempts to regroup have resulted in nothing.

Overall prospects for the far right in the Euro-election? Poor.



Euro-elections: Bulgaria

ATAKA gears up for Euro-elections

Dana Ionescu sent this dispatch from Sofia

IN SVILENGRAD, a Bulgarian border town next to the Turkish border, Angel Bozhinov, the local leader of the fascist ATAKA party lost his seat on the town council in the 2011 municipal elections. He now sees his personal fortunes and those of his party rising again, thanks to public anxiety over an influx of Syrian refugees across the nearby frontier.

ATAKA has been attracting the anti-establishment protest vote for almost a decade now. Membership of Bozhinov's local branch of ATAKA has surged. "People come up to me in the street and tell me that our party was right", he boasted to the *New York Times* last December.

For the past year, the western media has been highlighting that with populist, anti-immigrant parties gathering momentum across much of Europe, ATAKA stands out as a possible strong contender in the May 2014 EU elections. Its critics say the party remains a sinister political force — an example of how easily opportunistic groups can fuel public fears while improving their own electoral fortunes.

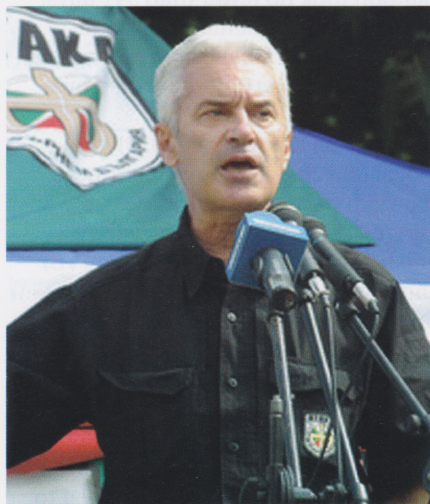
Volen Siderov, the party's outspoken and camera-obsessed leader, must also be jubilant after the recent split in the Bulgarian Socialist Party and hoping that some disillusioned BSP voters might vote for ATAKA instead. However, the most recent Bulgarian survey shows ATAKA are polling only 2.5%, and this trend has been steady for a couple of months now.

This very low figure is in sharp contrast with the 2009 EU elections results, when they secured 12% of the vote. Moreover, the Party Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS), the liberal party that primarily stands up for the

rights of the Turkish minority and is the archenemy of ATAKA, is polling between 6 and 7 %.

With the EU elections in Bulgaria most likely taking place on 25 May, Siderov shows few signs of worrying. Since 2005, ATAKA has constantly been Bulgaria's fourth strongest party, and, according to the legislation governing the EU elections in Bulgaria, there is no electoral threshold to qualify for an EU seat.

Both the leader and the party are going full steam ahead with their agenda of denouncing migrants and refugees, the "Jewish global conspiracy" and national minorities like Roma and Muslim Turks, along with its irredentist demands for the return of "lost" Bulgarian territory and rapid exit from the EU. Many across Europe compare it with the nazi Jobbik in Hungary and Golden Dawn in Greece. Fewer voices, however, dare speculate about its actual prospects with just three months to go until the EU elections.



Volen Siderov ATAKA leader

Danish People's Party hope for success

From Anne Jessen for *Demos* and Antifa-Net in Copenhagen

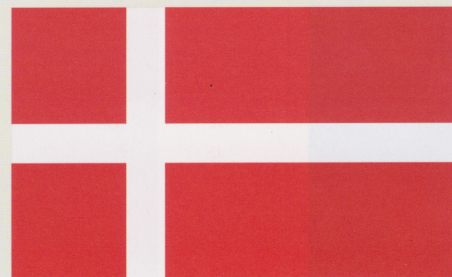
THE RIGHT-WING populist Danish People's Party (DF) will be the only right of centre party to contest the Euro-elections in Denmark. Its top candidate is Morten Messerschmidt who has sat in the Strasbourg parliament since 2009 when the DF got 15.3% of the vote and two seats. Besides Messerschmidt, who scored a notable victory with 280,000 personal votes under the Danish system, Anna Rosbach Andersen was chosen by the DF to enter the EU Parliament but in 2011 left the DF to work as an independent MEP

The DF vehemently rejects the EU but still stands candidates supposedly to represent Danish national interests in Brussels. A key aspect of its policy is to ensure Turkey is not accepted as a member of the EU because, claims the DF, Turkey's eastern culture is incompatible with Europe's western culture.

Inside the EU, the party promotes Europe's "freedom" alongside other nationalistically-minded MEPs in the Europe of Freedom and Democracy Group founded immediately after the June 2009 EU elections.

This group consists of the Finns Party, the French Mouvement pour la France, the Greek LAOS, the Italian Lega Nord, the Lithuanian Order and Justice Party, the Dutch

Euro-elections: Denmark





Danish People's Party's Morten Messerschmidt.
Photo: Elgaard

Reformed Political Party, the Slovak National Party and UKIP in the UK. Before the DF joined this group, it tried unsuccessfully to join the group European Conservatives and Reformists group.

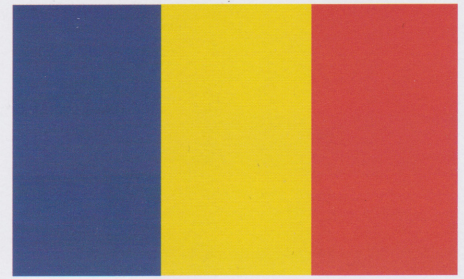
The DF has shown no interest in the efforts of Geert Wilders and Marine Le Pen to glue together a new right-wing nationalist-oriented populist group in the European Parliament, viewing the FN's antisemitism as too extreme. The DF, however, has had good relations for many years with Wilders, who has been invited several times to Denmark by the DF-linked anti-Islamic Free Press Society as a guest speaker. Wilders has also stressed that the DF is his political role model.

Founded in 1995 by Pia Kjaersgaard, the DF claims "Denmark is the land of the Danes" and that there is no room for people of other cultures. "Denmark," it declares, "is not a country of immigration". Such statements could also come from groups to the right of the DF. The DF distances itself from the overtly racist right but is openly Islamophobic.

The DF's countrywide influence has grown especially since 2001 when the Social Democratic government was voted out and a liberal-conservative government came to power for the next 10 years. In the elections of 2005, it gained 24 seats, rising to 25 in 2007 and only suffering losses – two seats – in 2011. Since the DF began to accrue influence, Denmark has adopted some of the toughest immigration and citizenship laws in Europe. In May, it could well increase its seats in the European Parliament.

Shipwreck in sight

From Dana Ionescu in Bucharest



Euro-elections: Romania



THE GREATER ROMANIA Party (Partidul Romania Mare – PRM) is heading for the final nail in its coffin. The ultranationalist, anti-Roma, anti-Hungarian, Islamophobic party that a decade ago ranked third in the country now has fewer than 5,000 members and looks set not to return to the European Parliament after 25 May.

Last summer, the party ejected its founder and long-standing leader, Corneliu Vadim Tudor, and is now embroiled in three major court cases – two filed by Tudor trying to regain leadership of the party or at least keep ownership of its name and legal identity in case he decides to go out setting up a new, revamped PRM and the third one taken up by debtors.

Under the circumstances, at the end of January the party's central office sent a letter to its 30 branches across Romania asking them to start gathering the 200,000 signatures needed to be legally able to put forward any candidates for the EU elections.

While the date for the EU elections in Romania has not yet been set, taking into account past elections, it looks most likely to be Sunday 25 May. As the final list of candidates has to be published 45 days before the elections, PRM has two months to gather signatures and fundraise and then only six weeks to campaign.

Many Romanian political analysts

and journalists doubt that is possible. PRM long ago lost the membership and organised structure it had in 2000, when Tudor came second in the presidential elections, winning 29% of the vote (3.2 million votes).

And, even if they do manage to gather the signatures, many doubt they can find the funds needed to run a campaign or field candidates who will get popular support and votes; not to mention that the latest poll shows PRM might get only 3% of the votes, 2% less than the Romanian threshold needed to win any seat.

Tudor, an incumbent MEP, might still run again for the EU Parliament this May. However, the politician that the Egyptian daily *Al-Ahram* once called the "Jean-Marie Le Pen of the Carpathians" is spending a small fortune on the two lawsuits he is waging against his former deputy, and current PRM President, Gheorghe Funar. Moreover, according to the Romanian legislation governing EU elections he himself needs a 5% election threshold, applied for each constituency, to get through.

While in a number of EU countries racist, fascist or populist parties are forecast to win much-increased votes, at least in Romania there is a strong possibility that the country's only significant ultranationalist party is now counting up its final days in Brussels.



Photo from
flickr by Sibadd

ORGANISING THE OPPOSITION

Dave Porter reports on attempts to build a broad-based and positive campaign against Golden Dawn

NICK GRIFFIN CALLS them his 'patriot comrades'. Others call them political thugs responsible for at least one murder and whose members proudly pose for pictures with guns staging mock executions.

With the Euro and local elections looming in May, threat from fascist party Golden Dawn could not be more real in Greece. In a country savaged by EU austerity measures and political violence, it is little surprise that the far right grouping attracts more than 10% of the vote.

Marilena Katsimi, leader of the Greek journalists' union



Anti-racist campaigners in Greece have been looking for inspiration to the success of HOPE not hate in helping crush the influence of the BNP and other far right groups in British politics. Campaign tactics and training strategies have been shared in recent months, and not just with Greek activists but with anti-racists across Europe.

Jason Hunter, a regional organiser for Unison North West, takes up the story: "The Open Society Foundation asked HOPE not hate to deliver a training programme for anti-racist leaders from across Europe. There was a study trip to the US in early January and then a four-day training course in Barcelona with Carlos Saavedra (*leader of the Dreamers movement in the US which campaigns on behalf of undocumented people*), attended by 26 leaders from eight countries. There were five people from Greece and they were very interested in the campaigning methodology of Carlos, which is to combine facts with storytelling."

This was followed, a week later, by a two-day trip to Greece by Carlos and Jason.

"We met several Greek groups there such as the Hellenic League for Human Rights and ended up going to Athens in the New Year at the invitation of Marilena Katsimi, leader of the journalists' union," he said.

"What came across strongly is that they don't have any groups like HOPE not hate. They have different groups

doing different kinds of things but they don't have a campaigning group as such. I spoke about what we had done in Britain through Unison, and with people like HOPE not hate, and brought lots of material for them to look at.

"I actually invoked the image of the hydra in Greek mythology, the many-headed monster. I said that racism has many forms – many heads – and you have to fight these different heads, and that has to continue for a long time to come. But one head in particular, Golden Dawn – just like the BNP that we confronted here – if they don't chop that head off the beast will move forward."

Jason admitted that with Greece's post-war history of military juntas and repression, the job for anti-racists in the country was that much harder given that many people saw groups such as Golden Dawn as their natural home.

"I think it's the early stages for them. I don't know whether there is time between now and the Euro and municipal elections to make a huge difference – they are in it for the long haul," he said.

Marilena, who is general secretary of the press union in Greece, told HOPE not hate: "The workshop in Barcelona and the intensive training in Athens by Carlos Saavedra and Jason Hunter, with a group of young activists, social psychologists and journalists, inspired us to continue our actions by implementing what we learned during the campaigning experience of HOPE not hate and



Yonous Mohammadi, of the Greek Forum for Refugees

the 'Dreamers'. The second step we are thinking about is to create a new organisation, which could operate like HOPE not hate in Greece."

Marilena, who was fired from state broadcaster ERT along with her co-presenter for daring to criticise the actions of a minister, says that while the rise of the far right is a concern throughout Europe, it is particularly troubling in Greece.

"In Greece things are different. First of all, Golden Dawn is not just a far right party, it is a nazi party with criminal activities like murder, and with three of their MPs, including their leader and other members of the party, detained awaiting trial. The rise of Golden Dawn came unexpectedly at the beginning of the financial crisis because of the unemployment and the corruption and inefficiency of the political system," she said.

"Although the criminal activities of Golden Dawn were known through reports and the hundreds of accusations of the mostly immigrants victims, the coalition government took legal action against the nazi party only after the assassination of a Greek anti-fascist activist by a Golden Dawn member and the persistent international pressure.

"Despite this, Golden Dawn continues to be the third party in the polls, to act violently against the immigrants and everybody who opposes them. And, of course, Golden Dawn and its practices are a threat to democracy. A ban of the party

is not a solution. The same persons can create another party with another name and participate in the elections."

Marilena says that the pluralism of Greek society can also be a hindrance when it comes to mobilising opposition to the far right, as she explains: "There is a common saying about the Greeks: 'If 10 Greeks are gathered they have 12 different opinions about one issue! There are a lot of organisations which are doing a great job in terms of anti-racist struggles and campaigning for immigrants' rights etc. After my experience with 'positive' campaigning I have the feeling that we must try this also in Greece and act united against Golden Dawn.

"The message must be clear and reach everybody: tolerance and anti-racist feelings are not the monopoly of the leftist groups. Everybody has the right to be informed and decide to vote for any other party except Golden Dawn. A campaign based on values and traditions, based on HOPE not hate is needed"

Marilena also identifies another problem in tackling such issues – the silence of the victim. She said: "Immigrants or homosexuals are verbally abused very often in public spaces in Greece and not only by members of Golden Dawn but by 'ordinary' people. In Greece victims are afraid to report incidents to the police because 40% of the policemen are supporters of Golden Dawn. The

impunity of the offenders and their tolerance by the society brings more violent acts and that goes on and on.

"It is very difficult to organise an anti-Golden Dawn movement in Greece at the time because Greeks are shocked, tired and hopeless. Only if they understand that the things which are uniting them with the immigrants are more than the things that separate them – and that their fate in poverty is common – will they perhaps get mobilised.

"They must also understand that even if we kick all the immigrants out of the country or even kill them all, they will still keep coming to Greece. People who decide to leave their country under the circumstances that we all know are not afraid of Golden Dawn."

But things are changing and the groundwork is being laid for a broader anti-racist struggle in Greece, partly inspired by anti-fascist movements in the UK. KEERFA is the Movement Against Racism and Fascism Threat in Greece and its co-ordinator Petros Konstantinou recently visited Liverpool to give a talk on the Greek fight-back against the far right following the murder of musician Pavlos Fyssas. And in the UK itself members of the Greek community alarmed at the rise in far right violence have come together to form Anti-Fascist Action for Greece (AAfG).

Amalia Kostorizou is Greek and an activist for HOPE not hate in

Manchester, and she closely monitors political developments in her home country. She agrees that there are obstacles to mobilising people in the fight against racism and fascism because of the nature of Greek society and culture.

She said: "Anti-racist groups are smaller and connected with leftist groups and maybe anarchist groups. You won't find anything like HOPE not hate and this is an issue. However, a lot of good work has been done by the trade unions, with big demonstrations and talks.

"There is an oral tradition in Greek culture. We have the athenaeum – a bit like the pub in England – but political dialogue is very sectarian and fragmented. Even people with the same political beliefs cannot even unite."

Amalia thinks that the murder of Fysas and the jailing of Golden Dawn's leaders may prevent it gaining more popular support – polls put support for Golden Dawn at 11% - but adds a note of caution: "There is a group of very young people who maybe lack an education, and add to that the fact that Greece has a very troubled history with the dictatorship and civil war and now the economic crisis, it means nothing is stable and if there is nothing stable violence will pass on to the younger generation who are vulnerable."

A different aspect to the crisis is offered by Helen Houvarda, a psychotherapist with Process in Greece, which works with groups to resolve conflict. She sees the daily effect of the current crisis on people's behaviour and thoughts.

"Due to the austerity measures and the threat of fascism, people suffer more, they are losing their access to social services, to health, to education, their income decreases rapidly, they lose their jobs, they feel insecure, multiculturalism has almost been legalized (aggressive politics by the state towards immigrants, the emersion of Golden Dawn), they become more polarised, we have intense conflicts between social groups (such as private and public sector, anarchist and fascists, immigrants and far-right groups, etc), they tend to isolate themselves or they are being isolated by the state, and they experience mild or severe depression," she said.

"The percentage of suicides has increased in Greece since the beginning of the crisis. People need more support on many levels, including a psychotherapeutic level. Sometimes people come into therapy and have as a presenting problem relationship issues or issues with low-confidence, or difficult mood states such as depression/ anxiety and panic attacks. But if you

look carefully you realise they do not only originate from personal issues but are highly connected with the social and political situation which has been developed the last four years in Greece."

Helen said the current crisis has made people "frightened, more aggressive, frozen and numb by the cruelty of fascism towards immigrants" and that people are losing their identity by feeling afraid to speak out, adding: "People tend to suppress their anger because if you express your anger you might run the risk of being characterized as a fascist".

She said: "But on the other side, because of the threat of fascism, you have also the development of solidarity, people tend to unite and to help each other in many different ways. Many social, psychotherapeutic, art groups have been created to offer support and help to ordinary people and to vulnerable and marginalised groups. The threat of fascism has allowed people to become more open to expressing themselves and discussing their fear, their suffering. It has promoted sharing and has given us the chance to talk about our dreams, our visions and to look at what kind of world we want to live in, to rethink our values and our identity as a nation and as humans."

Yonous Muhammadi, of the Greek Forum for Refugees, has personally suffered at the hands of Golden Dawn during an attack on their offices.

He said: "I was teaching Greek lesson. I was attacked badly and was bleeding from my face. This was shocking for me but more shocking was the police reaction to it. When I referred it to the police station some guards at the gate warned me that if I complained I would be detained for two nights. So imagine what would happen if there is attack on newcomers or undocumented. There is no protection of victims or witnesses."

Yonous says this merely reinforces the need for a strategy of organization among both Greek and immigrant communities.

"Greece is the entry point for the EU, so most refugees and asylum seekers for the first time in their lives experience a new culture, different religion, everything different. But there is no programme informing them about laws, regulations, their rights and responsibilities. Generally there is a policy of marginalisation of communities, so having an organised network of migrants or refugee communities is needed, to mobilise refugees and migrants for their rights and their responsibilities and give them a voice, which is what we do through the Greek Forum of Refugees and the Greek Forum of Migrants."

HOPE CAMP

THE CONTACT with Marilena and the other Greek anti-racist activists occurred through their participation in HOPE camp, a four-day training event HOPE not hate ran in partnership with Carlos Saavedra's Movement Mastery.

Late last year the Open Society Foundation gave a grant to HOPE not hate to run a programme which brought together and trained anti-racist leaders from across Europe. Central to every campaign are leaders and we argued that without investing time and resources into leaders and leadership, training campaigns were always going to find it more difficult to succeed.

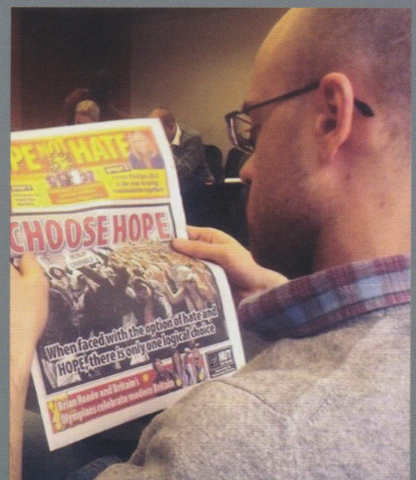
In early January we took 10 anti-racist leaders to Alabama, where we spent six days visiting museums and veterans of the civil rights struggles and meeting today's immigrant rights leaders.

A week later, Carlos Saavedra flew over to England to begin a 35-day trip. Carlos was the former national organiser of United We Dream, the campaign which forced President Obama to give a pathway to citizenship to 1.4m undocumented students. He was joined in his trip by Kate Werning, a youth organiser for Voces de la Frontera, in Wisconsin.

They led training for 65 HOPE not hate organisers in Manchester, before travelling to Barcelona for HOPE Camp.

In total there were 26 people at HOPE Camp, drawn from eight countries, and it was an amazing success.

This was then followed by Carlos and a HOPE not hate organiser travelling to several European cities to run more localised training.



Greek activists look through HOPE not hate material at a training event in Athens

Insulting the dead

Matthew Collins reports on how the British far right disgraced themselves at the end of the Lee Rigby trial

It was supposed to be a show of strength. In front of the world's media, the British far-right gathered outside the Old Bailey in London to hear the sentences handed down to Michael Adebolajo and Michael Adebowale, the two men who butchered an off-duty British soldier on a London street in broad daylight.

The British National Party (BNP) built gallows and unfurled banners of the countless different front organisations they have formed over the years. Their organisers shouted all day into a megaphone "BNP! BNP!". Television journalists, reporting from outside court to around the world, had to apologise for the racket.

The BNP's 'commercial rival', Britain First, marched to the court with faux military discipline. Then someone from the English Defence League (EDL) shouted "nonce" at their leader, Paul Golding, and he had another in a seemingly long line of public meltdowns to the delight and bemusement of crowds watching the bizarre sight of fascists hating fascists.

They were a disgrace, even for fascists and race-haters. They jockeyed for position, scowled and pointed threateningly at each other as they tried in vain to remember their self-imposed solemnity.

The EDL smoked joints outside pubs, inside the pubs they stood on tables and cheered at themselves when the television news crossed live to the Old Bailey. They fought in the street among themselves, they attacked an Asian family, they threatened photographers and news crews and issued threats to each other.

The South East Alliance (SEA), the 'unity' organisation, arrived later. They were embarrassed by their poor turnout and tried to hide with the BNP. They didn't know what to chant - nobody outside of Facebook had heard of them.

They became such a beer-swilling nuisance that the 100 fascists from five different organisations brought a part of London to a standstill.

And then one of them dropped his pants live on television, on the BBC, just minutes before the judge's sentencing was announced. Drummer Lee Rigby's family inside the Old Bailey decided not to come out and make a statement. Their grief, their moment of justice and their dignity, was robbed by the grief tourists, the morons and the recalcitrant British far-right.



The return of Combat 18

Nick Lowles

COMBAT 18 is the forgotten group on the British far right. Once so dominant, the openly nazi and pro-terrorist gang, which took its name from the first and eighth letters of the alphabet AH – Adolf Hitler, disappeared from the public eye soon after founder and initial leader Charlie Sargent was sent to prison for murder. Will Browning, who replaced Sargent and was behind much of its violence and turn to terrorism, seemingly dropped out of activity and moved abroad.

However, away from British media attention, Combat 18 (C18) has been expanding across Europe and now operates in at least 17 countries, making it the second largest nazi movement outside Blood and Honour.

It is not one single formal organisation but more a loose alliance of like-minded extremists who share similar goals and methods to achieve their aims.

In some countries 'C18' is simply a militant brand to differentiate themselves from the mainstream nazi movement, but at its heart is a small group of individuals who have shaped and led this movement over 20 years. They include C18 leader Will Browning, Czech-based but Serb-born Dragan Petrovic, Patrick du Bruin, Thorsten Heise and, before he went into semi-retirement, Erik Blücher.

While C18 have earned themselves the nickname of 'Hollywood nazis' by their far right rivals, there is a serious and dangerous side to them. There is an ongoing trial in Belgium of 17 nazis, 14 of them serving soldiers at the time of their arrest. Almost 400 guns were found, as well as bomb-making equipment and an assembled car bomb. It has emerged that one plan was to kill far right leader Phillip Dewinter and pass it off as a Muslim murder, and then kill the main Muslim politician in the country. The eventual aim, it has been alleged, was to start a race war.

Gone underground

While the 17 people are all from Belgium, they were closely linked to Dutch and German C18 activists, and, of course, C18 leader Will Browning.

After their arrest, it was reported in the Czech Republic that Dragan Petrovic, a close confidant of Will Browning's and a former White Eagle paramilitary, was raising money for their legal fight.

Information is also now emerging that some German C18 supporters were in direct contact with the NSU killers.

Over the last few years there has been police and security service action against C18 groups in the UK, Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Czech Republic and Serbia. Some have occurred because of criminality in the country concerned, but on other occasions they have been international security service operations. The decision by the FBI to take down the Czech C18 website came at the behest of British security services.

As a result, some of the longer-standing groups have collapsed while others – especially individuals – have stopped public activity and gone underground. This is certainly the case with Will Browning and those immediately around him.

Will we see C18 active again in the UK? Much of the old network still remains and they hold one or two gigs every year. More importantly, however, the release from prison of Charlie Sargent and Martin Cross is reigniting old animosities and dramatically increasing the chances that some of these semi-retired Nazis will make a return to action.



Combat 18 leader
Will Browning

BUY WHITE RIOT THE VIOLENT STORY OF COMBAT 18 SEE PAGE 45

The C18 international

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NORWAY

C18 has small networks of supporters in Bergen and Oslo. Leading them is former Chelsea headhunter hooligan, Darren Wilkinson (pictured centre), who currently works as a scaffolder in Oslo.



SWEDEN

Following the death of Marcel Schilf and imprisonment of several C18 supporters for murder and armed robbery, the militant Blood & Honour collapsed and the music operation moved abroad. However, a network still remains, comprising a few old National Socialist Front and Aryan Brotherhood activists, along with a few younger people.

Browning also has links with Sniper Records, which produced his '18 Was Right' album.



FINLAND

Browning's man in Finland is Marko Jäsä Järvinen, the man behind the Kriegsbrerichter videos. However, illness has curtailed his activities.

DENMARK

C18 appeared to collapse with the imprisonment of Thomas Nakaba (pictured) in 1998. However, the group never went away and it now shares some supporters with the Danmarks Nationale Front (DNF) and the White Pride hooligan gang in Aarhus. Among the key C18 contacts in Denmark are Kristian Mølgaard Larsen, Thomas Lundgreen Petersen and Mikkel Zeiler Pedersen.

It appears that Browning is once again back in contact with Nakaba.



UNITED KINGDOM

C18 was born in England but is now little more than a network of a few dozen activists and three nazi music bands. Still hold one or two gigs a year, normally in east London. Key figures include Nick Field, John Henderson and Kevin Gough. Politically, however, C18 is inactive in the UK.

Browning splits his time between London, Jersey and Belgium.

NORWAY

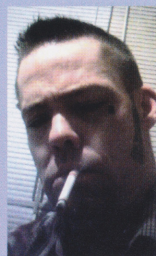
UNITED KINGDOM

BELGIUM

FRANCE

SWITZERLAND

USA



Jon Pressley

C18 moved much of its music operation to the US following crackdowns in the UK and Germany and the death of Marcel Schilf, with both ISD Records and NS88 both now operating from there. The two key C18 figures are former soldier Jon Pressley and Texas-based musclem Bart Alsbrook.



AUSTRIA

Relatively new to the network, the Austrian group is believed to be one of the few growth areas for C18.



John Henderson and Kevin Gough

FINLAND

Tomas Boutens



SWEDEN

DENMARK

NETHERLANDS

GERMANY

AUSTRIA

ITALY



Italian C18 supporters

Olivier Kunz



NETHERLANDS

Infighting and arrests for violence and possession of weapons have decimated C18 in the Netherlands and what's left of the once sizeable operation is now semi-dormant. A network continues to exist, with the main leaders being Ed Polman, Danny Janssen, Patrick de Bruin (pictured) and Niels Adams.



BELGIUM

For some years C18 operated in Belgium under the name BBET (Blood, Soil, Honour and Loyalty) and between 2004 and 2007 was perhaps the most active group in the C18 stable. However, after 17 were arrested, including 14 serving soldiers, and almost 400 guns captured, the group ceased public activity.

It is claimed that the plot involved assassinating Philip Dewinter, and passing it off as a Muslim killing, and then killing the leading Muslim politician in the country. The leader of the group was Tomas Boutens.

While the BBET collapsed after the arrests, a few of those involved are still active and their network is bolstered by Will Browning living in the country.

FRANCE

After little or no C18 activity here over the years, there is now a small but growing C18 group in France. Several dozen nazi skinheads attended the C18 ISD memorial gig in Switzerland last September.

SWITZERLAND

An emerging country for C18, Switzerland played host to C18's Ian Sturt Donaldson Memorial gig last September. One of those behind the scenes is veteran Swiss nazi Olivier Kunz, who despite dropping out of the scene in 1998, remains in contact with Will Browning.

ITALY

A growth area for C18, there appears to be local groups in Bologna, Turin and Milan. Some of the Bologna activists are linked with the Black Devils MC biker gang. A sizeable contingent of Italians attended the C18 ISD gig in Switzerland.

GERMANY

Police action in several cities broke up much of the organised C18 network but many of the activists are still around, as is the concept of its more militant Nazism it preached. C18 continues to operate in Dortmund and C18-supporting bands are still popular in the country. C18 gigs are held once or twice a year, attracting 500-1,000 people. Appears to be some cross-over between the C18 networks and the NSU.

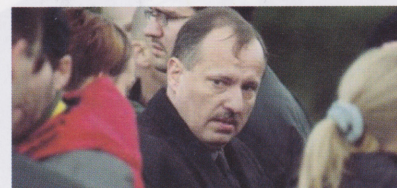
Despite his move into the NPD, Thorstein Heise remains in contact with Will Browning. Police have recently re-opened almost 400 unsolved murders, armed robberies and serious assaults as a consequence of the NSU case, some of which are believed to be linked to Germany C18 supporters.



The C18 international

LITHUANIA

There is a C18-supporting football hooligan gang in Lithuania. Norwegian-born nazi, Erik Blücher (pictured), who was once a key leader in the C18 operation in Scandinavia, is now living out in Lithuania.



POLAND

There are C18 branches in several cities and towns, and several football hooligan gangs boast of links. C18 has a Polish website and more violent Nazis continue to enjoy identifying themselves with the group, even if they do not have any direct link.

A Polish Redwatch website was closed down by the FBI and several people were convicted. However, within days of the convictions the site reappeared.



UKRAINE

There is a C18/B&H group out in the Ukraine, with many of them involved in the trouble that led to the downfall of the Government. Will Browning's No Remorse has performed in the Ukraine.

RUSSIA

In the summer of 2008, Will Browning's No Remorse played a gig for C18 Russia, a violent group of racist skinheads who were involved in a wave of murders and vicious attacks on immigrants throughout the country.

There was an overlap between Russia C18 and Format 18, the nazi group responsible for as many as 46 murders and dozens of other attacks on immigrants and gay people.

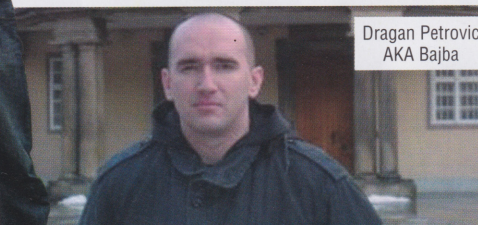


CZECH REPUBLIC

Eleven C18 supporters are currently awaiting trial for possession of weapons and with planning attacks against specific people and buildings. Among them is Dragan Petrovic, the Serbian C18 leader, who has lived in the Czech Republic for over 15 years. Bohemia C18, as it is called, boasts a C18 website and hosts regular gigs.

SERBIA

Serbia C18 was set up in 1995 by Dragan Petrovic AKA Bajba, and Radomir Cetojevic. Petrovic. Bajba, like several others present at the beginning, was involved in the White Eagles paramilitary group. Serbia C18 has been targeted and disrupted by police but while it is smaller than it once was it continues to be active in several cities and in Serbian areas of Kosovo.



Dragan Petrovic
AKA Bajba

LITHUANIA

POLAND

UKRAINE

CZECH REPUBLIC

SERBIA



C18 meeting in Serbia

REST OF THE WORLD

C18 groups have, over the last 10 years, existed in Argentina, Chile, Australia, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia, but all these groups appear to have folded.



SPECIAL OFFER FOR HOPE NOT HATE READERS

WHITE RIOT

The first edition of White Riot appeared in 2002 and charted the rise and fall of the nazi terror group, Combat 18. With the death of Chris Castle and the imprisonment of Charlie Sargent it had appeared that C18 was finished. Twelve years later and this new edition proves otherwise. While C18 is pretty much dormant in the UK, the organisation is still very much alive across Europe.

With 25,000 new words, White Riot charts:

- What the key players did next
- How C18 now operates in over 20 countries
- Will Browning's Plan B
- Belgium C18's plot to kill leading politicians
- German C18 links to the NSU killers
- The plot to raise a C18 army for action in Kosovo
- The burning hatred Browning and Sargent still have with one another

White Riot is the most authoritative and detailed account of Combat 18. This new version brings its story up to date.

NICK LOWLES


WHITE RIOT

THE VIOLENT STORY OF
COMBAT 18

**Out 1st May. Pre-order your
copy for £10 (inc p&p).
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A place to find

Colleen Molloy, regional co-ordinator of City of Sanctuary, which provides places of refuge for asylum seekers talks to Dave Porter



“ The problem of destitution is very widespread among asylum seekers. It is if it was not for the charities out there we would be seeing a lot of corpses on the street. ”

Sanctuary

Can you tell me a bit about the work of City of Sanctuary and how it came about?

It started in Sheffield in 2007 with a view to making it a place of welcome for asylum seekers. It soon began to spread and now you could say it's a grassroots movement of many cities and towns who want to be a place of welcome. In 2009 we adopted a national co-ordinator for the 10 or so towns and cities involved in the movement (it has now grown to 30 cities and towns). Some of the groups are well on their way to becoming recognised nationally as places of safety and welcome.

One major development we are nurturing at the moment are cross themes which are bringing people together, so you might have schools of sanctuary, health and maternity centres of sanctuary, and even theatres of sanctuary. This last one grew out of performances of Refugee Boy, the novel by Benjamin Zephaniah, which was turned into a play by the West Yorkshire Playhouse in Leeds. Out of the play they developed a whole range of resources with a lot of the work being done by asylum seekers themselves. We recently awarded West Yorkshire Playhouse as a theatre of sanctuary, and are looking at the same thing for the South Bank Centre and Nottingham Playhouse.

There's no limit to what can become a place of sanctuary: it could be a small football club or a mother and toddler group welcoming an asylum seeker mum, or it could be as big as a school or university.

What are the typical numbers of asylum seekers in our towns and cities?

There are roughly 20,000 across the country – in Leicester where I'm based there are about 600. Each city has its own quota negotiated with the Home Office and they are often housed in hard-to-let accommodation. In Leicester, the majority of asylum seekers are families. In terms of outcomes, about one third of them are

granted leave to remain at their first hearing, although that's reviewed after three to five years.

Another third are granted status on appeal and the rest are usually either deported back to their own country or can be left destitute and stateless until they can find fresh evidence to support another appeal.

What is life like for an asylum seeker in the UK from your perspective?

Well, first of all they don't get any benefits – they have to live off the equivalent of £36 per week. Some live in rooms in shared accommodation maybe with people of different languages and cultures. They have to sign on regularly to a reporting centre, like a criminal on bail, they can be detained and deported at any time. They are here because of persecution at home, being the wrong ethnic group, being gay, party politics etc. There's no choice about where they live and they can be moved at anytime, with 48 hours notice, to any part of the country.

How did you get personally involved with the City of Sanctuary movement?

I became involved as a volunteer, I was a shopping buddy and a host. I have had asylum seekers live with me and I suppose that developed my passion for this kind of work. I housed three people during a period of destitution for them – otherwise, they would be on the streets or sofa surfing. The problem of destitution is very widespread among asylum seekers. If it was not for the charities out there we would be seeing a lot of corpses on the street.

What do you get out of the work you do?

It's hugely rewarding. I've learnt a lot about other cultures and other peoples, I've learnt a lot about people trafficking, and I've learnt a lot about different foods and different languages. I'm learning a lot about how people survive, but also having the privilege

of being able to offer some kindness to somebody that makes a difference to their daily life.

On a personal level it makes me feel appreciative of the fact that I'm safe and secure – I know that I've not had to flee for my life and that puts my own life and my own worries into perspective.


I've met some wonderful people who have helped me appreciate my own life and I can honestly say that I've never met an asylum seeker whom I didn't like. When you meet some of them and realise the problems they have – many with depression and post-traumatic stress syndrome, anything you can do to alleviate that can make such a big difference.

This year we are organising a Sanctuary Summit nationally to bring together all the different groups working the sector – such as HOPE not hate – so that we can share our experiences. ●


FACT FILE:

- City of Sanctuary give talks and presentations to tell people what it is really like to be an asylum seeker
- Runs drop-in centres
- Run Arts, crafts, computers and other courses
- Arrange outings and social activities
- Helps people learn English
- Organises 'hosting' schemes
- Maintains a hardship fund for people in crisis
- Runs a bike scheme to help asylum seekers get out and about
- Collects everyday essential items from residents which it passes on to asylum seekers
- Operates a supermarket 'buddy' scheme where volunteers pass on cash to asylum seekers in place of their Azure card so they can spend it on every day luxuries such as a haircut

www.cityofsanctuary.org




TRANSPORT TUESDAY



On Tuesday 20 May HOPE not hate will be making one final push to turn out the anti-racist vote ahead of the European and local elections. On this one day we will be hoping to leaflet as least 300 train and tube stations and other transport interchanges across the country. With our target of putting out 500,000 leaflets in one day, it will be the biggest single anti-fascist day of action in British history.

To make this happen, we are asking people and organisations to commit to taking a lead at their local station or public place. We will then encourage our individual supporters in your locality to join you on the day.



PLEASE COMMIT TO HOSTING AN EVENT IN YOUR AREA

Station of choice

Name/organisation

Email

Address

Postcode

Telephone number

**SIGN UP TO TRANSPORT
TUESDAY AND HELP TURN
OUT THE ANTI-RACIST VOTE**

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